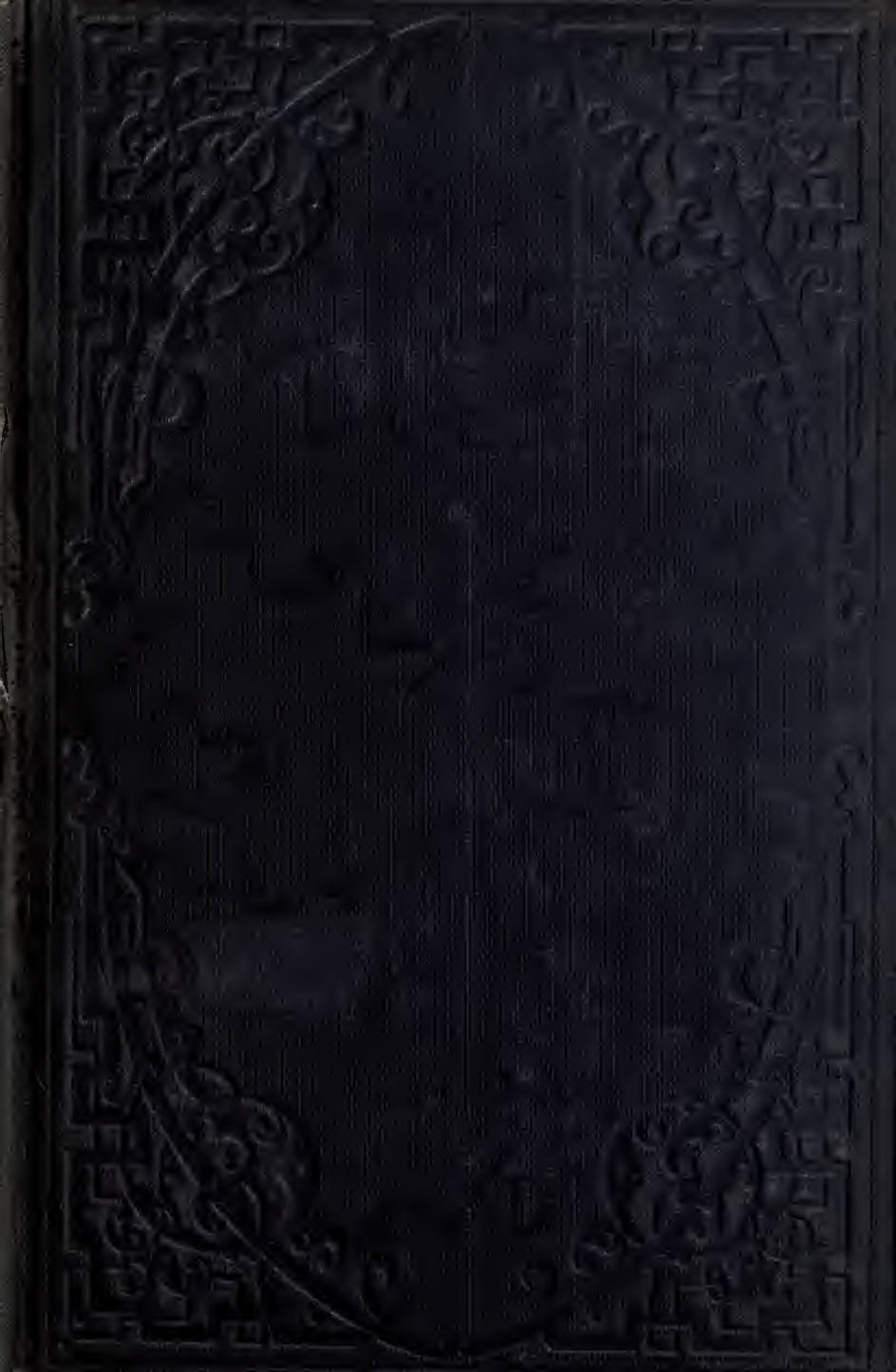

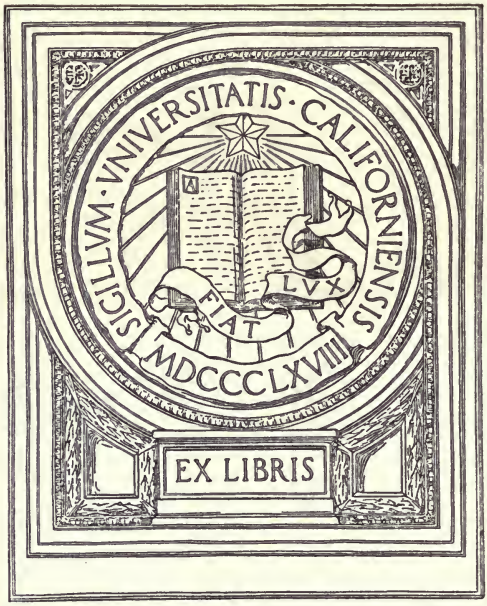

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RURAL LETTERS

AND OTHER RECORDS OF

THOUGHT AT LEISURE,

WRITTEN IN THE

INTERVALS OF MORE HURRIED LITERARY LABOR.

BY

N. PARKER WILLIS, 1806-1867

THE VOLUME CONTAINS "LETTERS FROM UNDER A BRIDGE," "OPEN AIR MUSINGS IN THE CITY," "INVALID RAMBLES IN GERMANY," "LETTERS FROM WATERING-PLACES," ETC.

"The forcing-garden, with its snowy roof
Shuts off the snow-quilt, and, of timely sleep,
Robs the sun-weary soil. In costly flowers
The o'ertasked juices languish to the sun,
And fragrantly breathe thro' the bright-dyed lips
Till the rich bloom seems Nature's. But, when Spring
Leaves the worn hot-bed idle, and the winds
Of summer with the cooling dews stray in,
The glad soil joyfully its trick unlearns,
And, in pale violets and daisies small,
Breathes its mere bliss in sunshine."

AUBURN AND ROCHESTER:
ALDEN AND BEARDSLEY.
1856.

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DEDICATORY LETTER.

TO IMOGEN.

My sweet daughter:

The Letters in this volume which describe your birthplace—mere pulse-countings as they are, in the way of literary records—should be dedicated to you, if printed at all; and I had therefore written your name after the title-page just ready for the press. A joyous laugh from you, at play with your doll in an adjoining room, reached my ear a moment since, however, and suggested to me the time that must elapse before you could read so uneventful a book understandingly, and the necessity there would be, even then, that the circumstances under which it was written should be somewhat explained to you. I felt—as a man fond of his grounds might do, who should see his favorite tree judged of by a single view at noon—a wish that it might be seen, also, with the shadows falling earlier and later. The interest with which these simple letters from Glenmary may be read by you, must depend much upon your knowing over what ground, in my own mind, this brief passage of my life threw its influences. If I had any of that instinctive feeling, which we sometimes vaguely trust, that I should be here, when you are grown to womanhood, to *say* to you what I have taken my pen to *write*, I should still let

the dedication, of this least-labored yet favorite volume, to my beloved child, stand simply with her name.

At the time of your birth, I had lived four years at Glenmary; and when—pacing the walk in front of my cottage, beneath the stars of a night of June—I heard your first faint cry, I recognized, in my tearful thanks to God, that a drop was overflowingly added, to a cup of happiness already swelling to the brim. For enjoyment of the rural life I found so delightful, I had, it is true, made somewhat the preparation with which one sleeps in a house that the haunting of some nameless spirit has made untenantable by others—searching first, with the candle of experience, every apartment besides the one I intended to occupy. I had tried life in every shape which, if left untried, might fret imagination. I had studied human nature under all the changes which can be wrought by differences of climate, rank, culture and association. My demands, for happiness, had closed in and concentrated upon my own heart, the farther I went and the more changes I tried. I came to Glenmary, absolute in my conviction that I brought with me, or could receive there, from God, all the material requisite for my best enjoyment of existence. In my five years' trial of this upshot of experiments in happiness, every hour wedded my love to it more strongly. Even the anxiety with which the loss of our small competency clouded the first year that the sweet thread of your life was braided through—even that harsh trouble, and the disasters and broken reliances which followed close upon its heels, and finally drove me back to the life I had rejected, failed to touch, while I could cling to the hope of remaining there, the essential elements of my endearment to that calm paradise. Misfortune, that changes the looks of men, my dear Imogen, leaves

he stars looking as kindly down, and the trees and flowers answering the eye as unreluctantly.

You can understand, from this, how, in the life pictured in these letters, lay a frame-work of *nurture for yourself*, the much pondered promises of which were the ties hardest to sunder. In all my observation of your sex, I had so learned the value of character formed under the influences of refined rural life, and taking its thought-pressure and guidance, meantime, from those minds, only, over which God has breathed the awe of parental responsibility. The impressible and flexible nature of woman so requires, for the preservation of its individuality, an isolation from the mixed influences and assimilating observances of a city. A dew-drop, given to the exhaling sun with its rounded pearl-shape unswayed but by breath from Heaven, and another, shaken from its leaf-shelter, and flung into a stream to flow on and waste, undistinguishable from turbid waters, are not more different in purity and beauty, than the same character may be made by these differences of nurture. Glenmary, after your birth, seemed to me to have been fore-chosen by my good angel, as the cradle and nursery I should want for you. With images of my fair child, tossing her sunny locks in unschooled grace to the wind, I had peopled all the wild wood-walks above the brook; the lawns and fields along the river were play-grounds and rambling places for a blue-eyed and infantile type of an angel mother; the trees seemed spreading their shadows in conscious preparation; the shrubs were planted to keep pace with her growth; and my own onward life—so cheered and beguiled, so graced and supplied with sweetest company and occupation—was forecast in a far-welcomed future. Do you not see how, without knowledge of

these dream-peoplings, you could scarce read my portrayings, of that relinquished life, with a full understanding of my value of it?

This five years' oasis of country existence, gave shape and force to another sentiment that has always struggled within me, and, (fancy-pricing of my saleable commodities though it seem,) I will venture to mention it—for, in imagining you as reading this volume, by-and-by, it is a view of myself that I like to think may grow out of the perusal. I scarce know how to express it, however; for, sure as I am of conveying the feeling of every man who has ever parcelled his free thoughts into "goods and groceries," it is difficult to phrase without misconveyance of meaning. If you have ever seen a field of broom-corn—the most careless branching and free swaying of all the products of a summer—and can fancy the contrast, in its destiny, between sweeping the pure air with the wind's handling, and sweeping what it more usefully may, when tied up for handling as brooms, you can understand the difference I feel, between using my thoughts at my pleasure, as in country life, and using them for subsistence as in my present profession. How much, and what quality, of an author, I might have been *from choice*, the tone of these Letters, I mean to say, very nearly expresses. I do not intend any comparative disparagement of what I have written upon compulsion The hot needle through the eye of the goldfinch betters his singing, they say. Only separate, if with this hint you can, what I have done as mental toil, from what I might have written had I been a thought-free farmer, with books, country leisure, and liberty to pick, with the perspective bettering of second thought from the brain's many-mooded vagaries.

A man may be excused for wishing not to be misrepresented to his child, and I have thus tried to make certain that my own writings, at least, shall speak truly of me to my daughter. The perversions and misrepresentations which follow and bark at one's progress, as curs chase a rail-train through a village street, I have no need to guard against, for they will be outrun and silenced if I am gone from you when you read this—harmless, of course, if I am here. And now, my little unconscious target, this arrow of twelve years' flight must be sped from the string; and, with a kiss, presently, of which you will be far from knowing the meaning or the devotion, I will imprint a prayer upon your forehead—that the shaft may find the heart it is aimed at, as well watched over and as blest as now, whether the bow that sent it be still bent or broken.

Affectionately,

N. P. WILLIS.

March, 1849.

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LETTERS

FROM UNDER A BRIDGE.

LETTER I.

My dear Doctor: Twice in the year, they say, the farmer may sleep late in the morning—between hoeing and haying, and between harvest and thrashing. If I have not written to you since the frost was out of the ground, my apology lies distributed over the "spring-work," in due proportions among ploughing, harrowing, sowing, plastering, and hoeing. We have finished the last—some thanks to the crows, who saved us the labor of one acre of corn, by eating it in the blade. Think what times we live in, when even the crows are obliged to anticipate their income!

When I had made up my mind to write to you, I cast about for a cool place in the shade—for, besides the changes which farming works upon my *epidermis*, I find some in the inner man, one of which is a vegetable necessity for living out-of-doors. Between five in the morning and "flower-shut," I feel as if four walls and a ceiling would stop my breath. Very much to the disgust of William, (who begins to think it was *infra dig.* to

have followed such a hob-nail from London,) I showed the first symptom of this chair-and-carpet asthma, by ordering my breakfast under a balsam-fir. Dinner and tea soon followed; and now, if I go in-doors by daylight, it is a sort of fireman's visit—in and out with a long breath. I have worn quite a dial on the grass, working my chair around with the sun.

"If ever you observed," (a phrase with which a neighbor of mine ludicrously prefaces every possible remark,) a single tree will do very well to sit, or dine, or be buried under, but you can not *write* in the shade of it. Beside the sun-flecks and the light all around you, there is a want of that privacy, which is necessary to a perfect abandonment to pen and ink. I discovered this on getting as far as "dear Doctor," and, pocketing my tools, strolled away up the glen to borrow "stool and desk" of Nature. Half-open, like a broad-leafed book, (green margin and silver type,) the brook-hollow of Glenmary spreads wide as it drops upon the meadow, but above, like a book that deserves its fair margent, it deepens as you proceed. Not far from the road, its little rivulet steals forth from a shadowy ravine, narrow as you enter, then widening back to a mimic cataract; and here, a child would say, is fairy parlor. A small platform (an island when the stream is swollen) lies at the foot of the fall, carpeted with the fine silky grass which thrives with shade and spray. The two walls of the ravine are mossy, and trickling with springs; the trees overhead interlace, to keep out the sun; and down comes the brook, over a flight of precipitous steps, like children bursting out of school, and, after a laugh at its own tumble, it falls again into a decorous ripple, and trips murmuring away The light is green, the leaves of the overhanging trees look trans

lucent above, and the wild blue grape, with its emerald rings, has wove all over it a basket-lattice so fine, that you would think it were done to order—warranted to keep out the hawk, and let in the humming-bird. With a yellow pine at my back, a moss cushion beneath, and a ledge of flat stone at my elbow, you will allow I had a secretary's outfit. I spread my paper, and mended my pen; and then (you will pardon me, dear Doctor) I forgot you altogether! The truth is, these fanciful garnishings spoil work. Silvio Pellico had a better place to write in. If it had been a room with a Chinese paper, (a bird standing forever on one leg, and a tree ruffled by the summer wind, and fixed with its leaves on edge, as if petrified with the varlet's impudence,) the eye might get accustomed to it. But first came a gold-robin, twittering out his surprise to find strange company in his parlor, yet never frighted from his twig by pen and ink. By the time I had sucked a lesson out of that, a squirrel tripped in without knocking, and sat nibbling at a last-year's nut, as if nobody but he took thought for the morrow. Then came an enterprising ant, climbing my knee like a discoverer; and I wondered whether Fernando Cortes would have mounted so boldly, had the peak of Darien been as new-dropped between the Americas, as my leg by his ant-hill. By this time, a small dripping from a moss-fringe at my elbow betrayed the lip of a spring; and, dislodging a stone, I uncovered a brace of lizards lying snug in the ooze. We flatter ourselves, thought I, that we drink first of the spring. We do not know, always, whose lips were before us.

Much as you see of insect life, and hear of bird-music, as you walk abroad, you should lie *perdu* in a nook, to know how much is frighted from sight, and hushed from singing, by your approach.

What worms creep out when they think you gone, and what chatterers go on with their story! So among friends, thought I, as I fished for the moral. We should be wiser, if we knew what our coming hides and silences, but should we walk so undisturbed on our way?

You will see with half a glance, dear Doctor, that here was too much company for writing. I screwed up my inkstand once more, and kept up the bed of the stream till it enters the forest, remembering a still place by a pool. The tall pines hold up the roof high as an umbrella of Brobdignag, and neither water brawls, nor small birds sing, in the gloom of it. Here, thought I, as far as they go, the circumstances are congenial. But, as Jean Paul says, there is a period of life when the real gains ground upon the ideal; and to be honest, dear Doctor, I sat leaning on the shingle across my knees, counting my sky-kissing pines, and reckoning what they would bring in saw-logs—so much standing—so much drawn to the mill. Then there would be wear and tear of bob-sled, teamster's wages, and your dead-pull springs, the horses' knees. I had nearly settled the *per* and *contra*, when my eye lit once more on "my dear Doctor," staring from the unfilled sheet, like the ghost of a murdered resolution. "Since when," I asked, looking myself sternly in the face; "is it so difficult to be virtuous? Shall I not write when I have a mind? Shall I reckon pelf, whether I will or no? Shall butterfly imagination thrust iron-heart to the wall? No!"

I took a straight cut through my ruta-baga patch and cornfield, bent on finding some locality (out of doors it must be) with the average attractions of a sentry-box, or a church-pew. I reached the high-road, making insensibly for a brush dam, where I should

sit upon a log, with my face abutted upon a wall of chopped saplings. I have not mentioned my dog, who had followed me cheerfully thus far, putting up now and then a partridge, to keep his nose in; but, on coming to the bridge over the brook, he made up his mind. "My master," he said, (or looked,) "will neither follow the game, nor sit in the cool. *Chacun à son gout.* I'm tired of this bobbing about for nothing in a hot sun." So, dousing his tail, (which, "if you ever observed," a dog hoists, as a flag-ship does her pennant, only when the commodore is aboard,) he sprung the railing, and spread himself for a snooze under the bridge. "*Ben trovato!*" said I, as I seated myself by his side. He wagged his tail half round to acknowledge the compliment, and I took to work like a hay-maker.

I have taken some pains to describe these difficulties to you, dear Doctor, partly because I hold it to be fair, in this give-and-take world, that a man should know what it costs his fellow to fulfil obligations, but more especially, to apprise you of the *metempsychose* that is taking place in myself. You will have divined, ere this, that, in my out-of-doors life, I am approaching a degree nearer to Arcadian perfectibility, and that if I but manage to get a bark on and live by sap, (spare your wit, sir!) I shall be rid of much that is troublesome, not to say expensive, in the matters of drink and integument. What most surprises me in the past, is, that I ever should have confined my free soul and body, in the very many narrow places and usages I have known in towns. I can only assimilate myself to a squirrel, brought up in a school-boy's pocket, and let out some June morning on a snake fence.

The spring has been damp for corn, but I had planted on a

warm hillside, and have done better than my neighbors. The Owaga* creek, which makes a bend round my meadow before it drops into the Susquehannah—(a swift, bright river the Owaga, with as much water as the Arno at Florence)—overflowed my cabbages and onions, in the May freshet; but that touches neither me nor my horse. The winter wheat looks like "velvet of three-pile," and everything is out of the ground, including, in my case, the buckwheat, which is not yet *put in.* This is to be an old-fashioned hot summer, and I shall sow late. The peas are podded. Did it ever strike you, by the way, that the pious Æneas, famous through all ages for carrying old Anchises a mile, should, after all, yield glory to a *bean.* Perhaps you never observed, that this filial esculent *grows up* with his father on his back.

In my "new light," a farmer's life seems to me what a manufacturer's might resemble, if his factory were an indigenous plant —machinery, girls, and all. What spindles and fingers it would take to make an orchard, if Nature found nothing but the raw seed, and rain-water and sunshine were brought as far as a cotton bale! Your despised cabbage would be a prime article—if you had to weave it. Pumpkins, if they ripened with a hair-spring and patent lever, would be, "by'r lady," a curious invention. Yet these, which Aladdin nature produces if we but "rub the lamp," are more necessary to life than clothes or watches. In planting a tree, (I write it reverently,) it seems to me working immediately with the divine faculty. Here are two hundred forest trees set out with my own hand. Yet how little is my part in the glorious creatures they become!

* Corrupted now to Owego. Ochwaga was the Indian word, and means *swift water.*

This reminds me of a liberty I have lately taken with Nature, which I ventured upon with proper diffidence, though the dame, as will happen with dames, proved less coy than was predicted. The brook at my feet, from its birth in the hills till it dropped into the meadow's lap, tripped down, like a mountain-maid with a song, bright and unsullied. So it flowed by my door. At the foot of the bank its song and sparkle ceased suddenly, and, turning under the hill, its waters disappeared among sedge and rushes. It was more a pity, because you looked across the meadow to the stately Owaga, and saw that its unfulfilled destiny was to have poured its brightness into his. The author of Ernest Maltravers has set the fashion of charity to such fallings away. I made a new channel over the meadow, gravelled its bed, and grassed its banks, and (last and best charity of all) protected its recovered course with overshadowy trees. Not quite with so gay a sparkle, but with a placid and tranquil beauty, the lost stream glides over the meadow, and, Maltravers-like, the Owaga takes her lovingly to his bosom. The sedge and rushes are turned into a garden, and, if you drop a flower into the brook at my door, it scarce loses a breath of its perfume before it is flung on the Owaga, and the Susquehannah robs him of it but with his life.

I have scribbled away the hours till near noon, and it is time to see that the oxen get their potatoes. Faith! it's a cool place under a bridge. Knock out the two ends of the Astor House, and turn the Hudson through the long passage, and you will get an idea of it. The breeze draws through here deftly, the stone wall is cool to my back, and this floor of running water, besides what the air steals from it, sounds and looks refreshingly. My letter has run on, till I am inclined to think the industry of running

water "breeds i' the brain." Like the tin pot at the cur's tail, it seems to overtake one with an admonition, if he but slack to breathe. Be not alarmed, dear Doctor, for, *sans* potatoes, my oxen will *loll* in the furrow, and though the brook run till doomsday, I must stop here.

LETTER II.

My dear Doctor: I have just had a visit from the assessor. As if a man should be taxed for a house, who could be luxurious under a bridge! I have felt a decided "call" to disclaim roof and threshold, and write myself down a vagabond. Fancy the variety of abodes open, rent-free, to a bridge-fancier! It is said among the settlers, that where a stranger finds a tree blown over, (the roots forming, always, an upright and well-matted wall,) he has only his house to *finish.* Cellar and chimney-back are ready done to his hand. But, besides being roofed, walled, and watered, and better situated, and more plenty than over-blown trees —bridges are on no man's land. You are no "squatter," though you sit upon your hams. You may shut up one end with pine boughs, and you have a room *a-la-mode*—one large window open to the floor. The view is of banks and running water—exquisite of necessity. For the summer months I could imagine this bridge-gipsying delicious. What furniture might pack in a donkey-cart, would set forth a better apartment than is averaged in "houses of entertainment," (so yclept,) and the saving to your soul (of sins committed, sitting at a bell-rope, ringing in vain for water) would be worthy a conscientious man's attention.

I will not deny that the bridge of Glenmary is a favorable specimen. As its abutments touch my cottage-lawn, I was under the necessity of presenting the public with a new bridge, for which act of munificence I have not yet received "the freedom of the town." Perhaps I am expected to walk through it when I please, without asking. The hitherward railing coming into the line of my fence, I have, in a measure, a private entrance; and the whole structure is overshadowed by a luxuriant tree. To be sure, the beggar may go down the bank in the road, and, entering by the other side, sit under it as well as I—but he is welcome. I like society *sans-gêne*—where you may come in or go out without apology, or whistle, or take off your shoes. And I would give notice here to the beggary of Tioga, that, in building a stone seat under the bridge, and laying the banks with green-sward, I intend no sequestration of their privileges. I was pleased that a swallow, who had laid her mud-nest against a sleeper overhead, took no offence at my improvements. Her three nestlings made large eyes when I read out what I have scribbled, but she drowses on without astonishment. She is a swallow of last summer, and has seen authors.

A foot-passenger has just gone over the bridge, and, little dreaming there were four of us listening, (the swallows and I,) he leaned over the railing, and ventured upon a soliloquy. "Why don't he cut down the trees so's he can see out?" said my unconscious adviser. I caught the eye of the mother-swallow, and fancied she was amused. Her swallowlings looked petrified at the sacrilegious suggestion. By the way, it is worthy of remark, that though her little ones have been hatched a week, this estimable parent still *sits upon their heads.* Might not this con-

tinued incubation be tried with success upon backward children? We are so apt to think babies are finished when their bodies are brought into the world!

For some minutes, now, I have observed an occasional cloud rising from the bottom of the brook, and, peering among the stones, I discovered one of the small lobsters with which the streams abound. (The naturalists may class them differently, but as there is but one, and he has all the armament of a lobster, though on the scale of a shrimp, the swallows agree with me in opinion that he should rank as a lobster.) So we are five. "Cocksnouns!" to borrow Scott's ejaculation, people should never be too sure that they are unobserved. When I first came under the bridge, I thought myself alone.

This lobster puts me in mind of Talleyrand. You would say he is going backward, yet he gets on faster that way than the other. After all, he is a great man who can turn his reverses to account, and that I take to be, oftentimes, one of the chief secrets of greatness. If I were in politics, I would take the lobster for my crest. It would be ominous, I fear, in poetry.

You should come to the country now, if you would see the glory of the world. The trees have been coquetting at their toilet, waiting for warmer weather; but now I think they have put on their last flounce and furbelow, spread their "bustle" and stand to be admired. They say "*leafy June.*" To-day is the first of July, and though I give the trees my first morning regard (out of doors) when my eyes are clearest, I have not fairly thought, till to-day, that the foliage was full. If it were not for lovers and authors, who keep vigil and count the hours, I should suspect there was foul play between sun and moon—a legitimate

day made away with now and then. (The crime is not unknown in the upper circles. Saturn devoured his children.)

There is a glory in potatoes—well hoed. Corn—the swaying and stately maize—has a visible glory. To see the glory of turnips, you must own the crop, and have cattle to fat—but they *have* a glory. Pease need no pæan—they are appreciated. So are not cabbages, which, though beautiful as a Pompeian wine-cup, and honored above roses by the lingering of the dew, are yet despised of all handicrafts—save one. Apt emblem of ancient maidenhood, which is despised, like cabbages, yet cherishes unsunned in its bosom the very dew we mourn so inconsistently when rifled from the rose.

Apropos—the delicate tribute in the last sentence shall serve for an expiation. In a journey I made through Switzerland, I had, for chance-travelling companions, three Scotch ladies, of the class emulated by this chaste vegetable. They were intelligent, refined, and lady-like; yet, in some Pencillings by the Way, (sketched, perhaps, upon an indigestion of mountain cheese, or an acidity of bad wine—such things affect us,) I was perverse enough to jot down a remark, more invidious than just. We are reached with a long whip for our transgressions, and, but yesterday, I received a letter from the Isle of Man, of which thus runs an extract: "In your description of a dangerous pass in Switzerland, you mention travelling in the same public conveyance with three Scotch spinsters, and declare you would have been alarmed, had there been any neck in the carriage you cared for, and assert, that neither of your companions would have hesitated to leap from a precipice, had there been a lover at the bottom. Did either of us tell you so, sir? Or what ground

have you for this assertion? You could not have judged of us by your own beautiful countrywomen, for they are proverbial for delicacy of feeling. You had not yet made the acquaintance of mine. We, therefore, must appropriate entirely to ourselves the very flattering idea of having inspired such an opinion. Yet allow me to assure you, sir, that lovers are by no means so scarce in my native country, as you seem to imagine. No Scotchwoman need go either to Switzerland, or Yankee-land, in search of them. Permit me to say then, sir, that as the attack was so public, an equally public *amende honorable* is due to us."

I make it here. I retract the opinion altogether. I do *not* think you "would have leaped from the precipice, had there been a lover at the bottom." On the contrary, dear Miss ——, I think you would have waited till he climbed up. The *amende*, I flatter myself, could scarce be more complete. Yet I will make it stronger if you wish.

As I look out from under the bridge, I see an oriole sitting upon a dog-wood tree of my planting. His song drew my eye from the paper. I find it difficult, now, not to take to myself the whole glory of tree, song, and plumage. By an easy delusion, I fancy he would not have come but for the beauty of the tree, and that his song says as much in bird-recitative. I go back to one rainy day of April, when, hunting for maple saplings, I stopped under that graceful tree, in a sort of island jungle, and wondered what grew so fair that was so unfamiliar, yet with a bark like the plumage of the pencilled pheasant. The limbs grew curiously. A lance-like stem, and, at regular distances, a cluster of radiating branches, like a long cane thrust through inverted parasols. I set to work with spade and pick, took it

home on my shoulder, and set it out by Glenmary brook; and there it stands to-day, in the full glory of its leaves, having just shed the white blossoms with which it kept holyday in June. Now the tree would have leafed and flowered, and the bird, in black and gold, might perchance have swung and sung on the slender branch, which is still tilting with his effort in the last cadenza. But the fair picture it makes to my eye, and the delicious music in my ear, seem to me no less of my own making and awaking. Is it the same tree, flowering unseen in the woods, or transplanted into a circle of human love and care, making a part of woman's home, and thought of and admired whenever she comes out from her cottage, with a blessing on the perfume and verdure? Is it the same bird, wasting his song in the thicket, or singing to me, with my whole mind afloat on his music, and my eyes fastened to his glittering breast? So it is the same block of marble, unmoved in the caves of Pentelicus, or brought forth and wrought under the sculptor's chisel. Yet the sculptor is allowed to *create.* Sing on, *my* bright oriole! Spread to the light and breeze your desiring finger, *my* flowering tree! Like the player upon the organ, I take your glory to myself; though, like the hallelujah that burns under his fingers, your beauty and music worship God.

There are men in the world whose misfortune it is to think too little of themselves—*rari nantes in gurgite vasto.* I would recommend to such to plant trees, and live among them. This suggesting to nature—working, as a master-mind, with all the fine mysteries of root and sap obedient to the call—is very king-like. Then how elevating is the society of trees! The objection I have to a city, is the necessity, at every other step, of passing some

acquaintance or other, with all his merits or demerits entirely through my mind—some man, perhaps, whose existence and vocation I have not suggested—(as I might have done were he a tree)—whom I neither love, nor care to meet; and yet he is thrust upon my eye, and must be noticed. But to notice him with propriety, I must remember what he is—what claims he has to my respect, my civility. I must, in a minute, balance the account between my character and his, and, if he speak to me, remember his wife and children, his last illness, his mishap or fortune in trade, or whatever else it is necessary to mention in condolence or felicitation. A man with but a moderate acquaintance, living in a city, will pass through his mind each day, at a fair calculation, say two hundred men and women, with their belongings. What tax on the memory! What fatigue (and all profitless) to them and him! "Sweep me out like a foul thoroughfare!" say I. "The town has trudged through me!"

I like my mind to be a green lane, private to the dwellers in my own demesne. I like to be bowed to as the trees bow, and have no need to bow back or smile. If I am sad, my trees forego my notice without offence. If I am merry, or whimsical, they do not suspect my good sense, or my sanity. We have a constant itching (all men have, I think) to measure ourselves by those about us. I would rather it should be a tree than a fop, or a politician, or a 'prentice. We grow to the nearest standard. We become Lilliputians in Lilliput. Let me grow up like a tree.

But here comes Tom Groom with an axe, as if he had looked over my shoulder, and started, apropos of trees.

"Is it that big button-ball you'll have cut down, sir?"

"Call it a sycamore, Tom, and I'll come and see." It is a fine

old trunk, but it shuts out the village spire and must come down.

Adieu, dear Doctor; you may call this a letter if you will, but it is more like an essay.

LETTER III.

Dear Doctor: There are some things that grow more certain with time and experience. Among them, I am happier for finding out, is the affinity which makes us friends. But there are other matters which, for me, observation and knowledge only serve to perplex, and among these is to know whose "education has been neglected." One of the first new lights which broke on me, was after my first day in France. I went to bed with a new-born contempt, mingled with resentment, in my mind, toward my venerable *alma mater*. The three most important branches of earthly knowledge, I said to myself, are to understand French when it is spoken, to speak it so as to be understood, and to read and write it with propriety and ease. For accomplishment in the last, I could refer to my diploma, where the fact was stated on indestructible parchment. But allowing it to speak the truth, (which was allowing a great deal,) there were the two preceding branches, in which (most culpably to my thinking) "my education *had* been neglected." Could I have taken out my brains, and, by simmering in a pot, have decocted Virgil, Homer, Playfair, Dugald Stewart, and Copernicus, all five, into one very small Frenchman—(what they had taught me to what he could teach)—I should have been content, though the fiend blew the fire.

I remember a beggarly Greek, who acquired an ascendency over eight or ten of us, gentlemen and scholars, travelling in the east, by a knowledge of what esculents, growing wild above the bones of Miltiades, were "good for greens." We were out of provisions, and fain to eat with Nebuchadnezzar. "Hang grammar!" thought I, "here's a branch in which my education has been neglected." Who was ever called upon in his travels to conjugate a verb? Yet here, but for this degenerate Athenian, we had starved for our ignorance of what is edible in plants.

I had occasion, only yesterday, to make a similar remark. I was in a crowded church, listening to a Fourth of July oration. What with one sort of caloric and what with another, it was very uncomfortable, and a lady near me became faint. To get her out, was impossible, and there was neither fan, nor *sal volatile*, within twenty pews. The bustle, after a while, drew the attention of an uncombed Yankee in his shirt-sleeves, who had stood in the aisle with his mouth open, gazing at the stage in front of the pulpit, and wondering, perhaps, what particular difference between sacred and profane oratory required this painstaking exhibition of the speaker's legs. Comprehending the state of the case at a single glance, the backwoodsman whipped together the two ends of his riding-switch, pulled his cotton handkerchief tightly over it, and, with this effective fan, soon raised a breeze that restored consciousness to the lady, besides cooling everybody in the vicinity. Here is a man, thought I, brought up to have his wits ready for an emergency. *His* "education has not been neglected."

To know nothing of sailing a ship, of farming, of carpentering, in short, of any trade or profession, may be a proper, though

sometimes inconvenient ignorance. I only speak of such deficiencies, as a modest person will not confess without giving a reason—as a man who can not swim will say he is liable to the cramp in deep water. With some reluctance, lately, I have brought myself to look after such dropped threads in my own woof of acquisitions, in the hope of mending them before they were betrayed by an exigency. Trout-fishing is one of these. I plucked up heart a day or two since, and drove to call upon a young sporting friend of mine, to whom I confessed, plump, I never had caught a trout. I knew nothing of flies, worms, rods, or hooks. Though I had seen in a book that "hog's down" was the material for the May-fly, I positively did not know on what part of that succulent quadruped the *down* was found.

"Positively?"

"Positively!"

My friend F. gravely shut the door to secure privacy to my ignorance, and took from his desk a volume—of flies! Here was new matter! Why, sir! your trout-fishing is a politician of the first *water!* Here were baits adapted to all the whims, weaknesses, states of appetite, even counter-baits to the very cunning, of the fish. Taking up the "Spirit of the Times" newspaper, his authority in all sporting matters, which he had laid down as I came in, he read a recipe for the construction of one out of these many seductive imitations, as a specimen of the labor bestowed on them. "The body is dubbed with hog's down, or light bear's hair mixed with yellow mohair, whipped with pale floss silk, and a small strip of peacock's herl for the head. The wings from the rayed feathers of the mallard, dyed yellow; the hackle from the

bittern's neck, and the tail from the long hairs of the sable or ferret."

I cut my friend short, midway in his volume, for, ever since my disgust at discovering that the perplexed grammar I had been whipped through was nothing but the art of talking correctly, which I could do before I began, I have had an aversion to rudiments. "Frankly," said I, "dear F. my education has been neglected. Will you take me with you, trout-fishing, fish yourself, answer my questions, and assist me to pick up the science in my own scrambling fashion?"

He was good-natured enough to consent, and now, dear Doctor, you see to what all this prologue was tending. A day's trout-fishing may be a very common matter to you, but the sport was as new to me as to the trout. I may say, however, that of the two, I took to the novelty of the thing more kindly.

The morning after was breezy, and the air, without a shower, had become cool. I was sitting under the bridge, with my heels at the water's edge, reading a newspaper, while waiting for my breakfast, when a slight motion apprised me that the water had invaded my instep. I had been wishing the sun had drank less freely of my brook, and, within a few minutes of the wish, it had risen, doubtless, from the skirt of a shower in the hills beyond us. "Come!" thought I, pulling my boots out of the ripple, "so should arrive favors that would be welcome—no herald, and no weary expectation. A human gift so uses up gratitude with the asking and delaying." The swallow heard the increased babble of the stream, and came out of the air like a scimetar to see if her little ones were afraid, and the fussy lobster bustled

about in his pool, as if there were more company than he expected. "*Semper paratus* is a good motto, Mr. Lobster!" "I will look after your little ones, Dame Swallow!" I had scarce distributed these consolations among my family, when a horse crossed the bridge at a gallop, and the head of my friend F. peered presently over the railing.

"How is your brook?"

"Rising, as you see!"

It was evident there had been rain west of us, and the sky was still gray—good auspices for the fisher. In half an hour we were climbing the hill, with such contents in the wagon-box as my friend advised—the *debris* of a roast pig and a bottle of hock, supposed to be included in the bait. As we got into the woods above, (part of my own small domain,) I could scarce help addressing my tall tenantry of trees. "Grow away, gentlemen," I would have said, had I been alone; "I rejoice in your prosperity. Help yourselves to the dew and the sunshine! If the showers are not sent to your liking, thrust your roots into my cellar, lying just under you, and moisten your clay without ceremony—the more the better." After all, trees have pleasant ways with them. It is something that they find their own food and raiment—something that they require neither watching nor care—something that they know, without almanac, the precession of the seasons, and supply, unprompted and unaided, the covering for their tender family of germs. So do not other and less profitable tenants. But it is more to me that they have no whims to be reasoned with, no prejudices to be soothed, no garrulity to reply or listen to. I have a peculiarity which this touches nearly. Some men "make a god of their belly;" some

spend thought and cherishing on their feet, faces, hair; some few on their fancy or their reason. *I* am chary of my gift of speech. I hate to *talk* but for my pleasure. In common with my fellow-men, I have one faculty which distinguishes me from the brute—an articulate voice. I speak (I am warranted to believe) like my Maker and his angels. I have, committed to me, an instrument no human art has ever imitated, as incomprehensible in its fine and celestial mechanism as the reason which controls it. Shall I breathe on this articulate wonder at every fool's bidding? Without reasoning upon the matter as I do now, I have felt indignant at the common adage, "words cost nothing!" It is a common saying in this part of the country, that "you may talk off ten dollars in the price of a horse." Those who have travelled in Italy, know well, that, in procuring anything in that country, from a post-carriage to a paper of pins, you pay so much money, so much talk—the less talk the more money. I commenced all my bargains with a compromise—"You charge me ten scudi, and you expect me to talk you down to five. I know the price and the custom. Now, I will give you seven and a half if you will let me off the talk." I should be glad if all buying and selling were done by signs. It seems to me that talking on a sordid theme invades and desecrates the personal dignity. The "*scripta verba manent*" has no terrors for me. I could write that without a thought, which I would put myself to great inconveniences to avoid *saying*.

You, dear Doctor, among others, have often asked me how long I should be contented in the country. *Comment, diable!* ask, rather, how you are contented in a town! Does not every creature, whose name may have been mentioned to you—a vast

congregation of nothinglings—stop you in the street, and, will you, nill you, make you perform on your celestial organ of speech—nay, even choose the theme out of his own littlenesses? When and how do you possess your thoughts, and their godlike interpreter, in dignity and peace? You are a man, of all others, worthy of the unsuggestive listening of trees. Your coinage of thought, profuse and worthy of a gift of utterance, is alloyed and depreciated by the promiscous admixtures of a town. Who ever was struck with the majesty of the human voice in the street? Yet, who ever spoke, the meanest, in the solitude of a temple, or a wilderness, or in the stillness of night—wherever the voice is alone heard—without an awe of his own utterance—a feeling as if he had exercised a gift, which had in it something of the supernatural?

The Indian talks to himself, or to the Great Spirit in the woods, but is silent among men. We take many steps toward civilization as we get on in life, but it is an error to think that the heart keeps up with the manners. At least, with me, the perfection of existence seems to be, to possess the arts of social life, with the simplicity and freedom of the savage. They talk of "unbridled youth!" Who would not have borne a rein at twenty, he scorns at thirty? Who does not, as his manhood matures, grow more impatient of restraint—more unwilling to submit to the conventional tyrannies of society—more ready, if there were half a reason for it, to break through the whole golden but enslaving mesh of society, and start fresh, with Nature and the instincts of life, in the wilderness. The imprisonment, to a human eye, may be as irksome as a fetter—yet they who live in cities are never

loosed. Did you ever stir out of doors without remembering that you were *seen?*

I have given you my thoughts as I went by my tall foresters, dear Doctor, for it is a part of trout-fishing, as quaint Izaak held it, to be stirred to musing and revery by the influences of nature. In this free air, too, I scorn to be tied down to "the proprieties." Nay, if it come to that, why should I finish what I begin? Dame Swallow, to be sure, looks curious to hear the end of my first lesson with the angle. But no! rules be hanged! I do not live on a wild brook to be plagued with rhetoric. I will seal up my letter where I am, and go a-field. You shall know what we brought home in the basket when I write again.

LETTER IV.

My dear Doctor: Your letters, like yourself, travel in the best of company. What should come with your last, but a note from our friend Stetson of the Astor, forwarding a letter which a traveller had left in the bronze vase, with "something enclosed which feels like a key." "*A key,*" quotha! Attar of jasmine, subtle as the breath of the prophet from Constantinople by private hand! No less! The small gilt bottle, with its cubical edge and cap of parchment, lies breathing before me. I think you were not so fortunate as to meet Bartlett, the draughtsman of the American Scenery—the best of artists in his way, and the pleasantest of John Bulls, *any way.* He travelled with me a summer here, making his sketches, and has since been sent by the same enterprising publisher, (Virtue, of Ivy Lane,) to sketch in the Orient. ("Stand by," as Jack says, for something glorious from that quarter.) Well—pottering about the Bezestein, he fell in with my old friend Mustapha, the attar-merchant, who lifted the silk curtains for him, and, over sherbet and spiced coffee in the inner divan, questioned him of America—a country which, to Mustapha's fancy, is as far beyond the moon as the moon is beyond the gilt tip of the seraglio. Bartlett told him the sky was

round in that country, and the women faint and exquisite as his own attar. Upon which Mustapha took his pipe from his mouth, and praised Allah. After stroking the smoke out of his beard, and rolling his idea over the whites of his eyes for a few minutes, the old merchant pulled, from under the silk cushion, a visiting card, once white, but stained to a deep orange with the fingering of his fat hand, unctuous from bath-hour to bath-hour with the precious oils he trafficks in. When Bartlett assured him he had seen me in America, (it was the card I had given the old Turk at parting, that he might remember my name,) he settled the curtains which divide the small apartment from the shop, and, commanding his huge Ethiopian to watch the door, entered into a description of our visit to the forbidden recesses of the slave-market; of his purchase, (for me,) of the gipsy Maimuna; and some other of my six weeks' adventures in his company—for Mustapha and I, wherever it might lie in his fat body, had a nerve in unison. We mingled like two drops of the oil of roses. At parting, he gave Bartlett this small bottle of jasmine, to be forwarded to me, with much love, at his convenience; and with the perfume of it in my nostrils, and the corpulent laugh of old Mustapha ringing in my ear, I should find it difficult, at this moment, to say how much of me is under this bridge in Tioga, North America. I am not sure that my letter should not be dated "attar shop, near the seraglio," for there, it seems to me, I am writing.

"Tor-mentingest growin' time, aint it!" says a neighbor, leaning over the bridge at this instant, and little thinking that, on that breath of his, I travelled from the Bosphorus to the Susquehannah. Really, they talk of steamers, but there is no travelling

conveyance like an interruption. A minute since, I was in the capital of the Palæologi, smoking a *narghile* in the Turk's shop. *Presto!* here I am in the county of Tiog', sitting under a bridge, with three swallows and a lobster, (not three lobsters at a swallow—as you are very likely to read, in your own careless way,) and no outlay for coals or canvass. Now, why should not this be reduced to a science—like steam? I'll lend the idea to the cause of knowledge. If a man may travel from Turkey to New York on a passing remark, what might be done on a long sermon? At present the agent is irregular—so was steam. The performance of the journey, at present, is compulsory—so was travelling by steam before Fulton. The discoveries in animal magnetism justify the most sanguine hopes on the subject, and "open up," as Mr. Bulwer would express it, a vast field of novel discovery.

The truth is, (I have been sitting a minute, thinking it over,) the chief obstacle and inconvenience in travelling is the prejudice in favor of taking the body with us. It is really a preposterous expense. Going abroad exclusively for the benefit of the mind, we are at no little trouble, in the first place, to provide the means for the body's subsistence on the journey, (the mind not being subject to "charges;") and then, besides trailing after us, through ruins and galleries, a companion who takes no enjoyment in pictures or temples, and is perpetually incommoded by our enthusiasm, we undergo endless vexation and annoyance with the care of his baggage. Blessed be Providence, the mind is independent of boots and linen. When the system, above hinted at, is perfected, we can leave our box-coats at home, *item* pantaloons for all weathers, *item* cravats, flannels, and innumerable hose. I shall

use my portmanteau to send eggs to market, with chickens in the two carpet-bags. My body I shall leave with the dairy-woman, to be fed at milking-time. Probably, however, in the progress of knowledge, there will be some discovery by which it can be closed in the absence of the mind, like a town-house when the occupant is in the country—blinds down, and a cobweb over the keyhole.

In all the prophetic visions of a millennium, the chief obstacle to its progress is the apparently undiminishing necessity for the root of all evil. Intelligence is diffusing, law becoming less merciless, ladies driving hoops, and (I have observed) a visible increase of marriages between elderly ladies and very young gentlemen—the last a proof that the affections (as will be universally true in the millennium) *may* retain their freshness in age. But, among all these lesser beginnings, the philanthropist has hitherto despaired, for, to his most curious search, there appeared no symptom of beginning to live without money. May we not discern in this system, (by which the mind, it is evident, may perform some of the most expensive functions of the body,) a dream of a moneyless millennium—a first step towards that blessed era when "Biddle and discounts" will be read of like "Aaron and burnt-offerings" —ceremonies which once made it necessary for a high-priest, and an altar at which the innocent suffered for the guilty, but which shall have passed away in the blessed progress of the millennium?

If I may make a grave remark to you, dear Doctor, I think the whole bent and spirit of the age we live in, is, to make light of *matter*. Religion, which used to be seated in the heart, is, by the new light of Channing, addresed purely to the intellect.

The feelings and passions, which are bodily affections, have less to do with it than the mind. To eat with science and drink hard, were once passports to society. To think shrewdly and talk well, carry it now. Headaches were cured by pills, which now yield to magnetic fluid—nothing so subtle. If we travelled once, it must be by pulling of solid muscle. Rarefied air does it now, better than horses. War has yielded to negotiation. A strong man is no better than a weak one. Electro-magnetism will soon do all the work of the world, and men's muscles will be so much weight—no more. The amount of it is, that *we are gradually learning to do without our bodies.* The next great discovery will probably be some pleasant contrivance for getting out of them, as the butterfly sheds his worm. Then, indeed, having no pockets, and no "*corpus*" for your "*habeas,*" we can dispense with money and its consequences, and lo! the millennium! Having no stomachs to care for, there will be much cause of sin done away, for, in most penal iniquities, the stomach is at the bottom. Think what smoothness will follow in "the course of true love"—money coming never between! It looks ill for your profession, dear Doctor. We shall have no need of physic. The fee will go to him who "ministers to the *mind* diseased"—probably the clergy. (*Mem.* to put your children in the church.) I am afraid crowded parties will go out of fashion—it would be so difficult to separate one's globule in case of "mixed society"—yet the extrication of gases might be improved upon. Fancy a lady and gentleman made "common air" of, by the mixture of their "oxygen and hydrogen!"

What most pleases me in the prospect of this Swedenborg order of things, is the probable improvement in the laws. In

the physical age passing away, we have legislated for the protection of the body, but no pains or penalties for wounds upon its more sensitive inhabitant—murder to break the snail's *shell*, but innocent pastime to thrust a pin into the snail. In the new order of things, we shall have penal laws for the protection of the sensibilities—whether they be touched through the fancy, the judgment, or the personal dignity. Those will be days for poets! Critics will be hanged—or worse. A sneer will be manslaughter. Ridicule will be a deadly weapon, only justifiable when used in defence of life. For scandal, imprisonment from ten to forty years, at the mercy of the court. All attacks upon honor, honesty, or innocence, capital crimes. That the London Quarterly ever existed, will be classed with such historical enormities as the Inquisition, and torture for witchcraft; and "to be *Lockharted*" will mean, then, what "to be *Burked*" means now.

You will say, dear Doctor, that I am the "ancient mariner" of letter-writers—telling my tale out of all *apropos-ity*. But, after some consideration, I have made up my mind, that a man who is at all addicted to revery, must have one or two escape-valves—a journal or a very random correspondence. For reasons many and good, I prefer the latter; and the best of those reasons is my good fortune in possessing a friend like yourself, who is above "proprieties," (prosodically speaking,) and so you have become to me, what Asia was to Prometheus—

> "When his being overflowed,
> Was like a golden chalice to bright wine,
> Which else had sunk into the thirsty dust."

Talking of trout. We emerged from the woods of Glenmary,

(you left me there in my last letter,) and rounding the top of the hill, which serves for my sunset drop-curtain, we ran down a mile to a brook in the bed of a low valley. It rejoices in no name, that I could hear of; but, like much that is uncelebrated, it has its virtues. Leaving William to tie the horse to a hemlock, and bring on the basket, we started up the stream; and, coming to a cold spring, my friend sat down to initiate me into the rudiments of preparing the fly. A very gay-coated gentleman was selected, rather handsomer than your horse-fly, and whipped upon a rod quite too taper for a comparison.

"What next?"

"Take a bit of worm out of the tin box, and cover the barb of the hook!"

"I will. Stay! where are the *bits?* I see nothing here but full-length worms, crawling about, with every one his complement of extremities—not a tail astray."

"Bah! pull a bit off!"

"What! you don't mean that I am to pull one of these squirming unfortunates in two?"

"Certainly!"

"Well, come! that seems to me rather a liberty. I grant you 'my education has been neglected,' but, my dear F., there is mercy in a guillotine. I had made up my mind to the death of the fish, but this preliminary horror!"—

"Come! don't be a woman!"

"I wish I were—I should have a pair of scissors. Fancy having your leg *pulled* off, my good fellow. I say it is due to the poor devil that the operation be as short as possible. Suppose your thumb slip?"

"Why, the worm feels nothing! Pain is in the imagination. Stay! I'll do it for you—there?"

What the remainder of the worm felt, I had no opportunity of observing, as my friend thrust the tin box into his pocket immediately; but the "bit" which he dropped into the palm of my hand, gave every symptom of extreme astonishment, to say the least. The passing of the barb of the hook three times through him, seemed rather to increase his vitality, and looked to me as little like happiness as anything I ever saw on an excursion of pleasure. Far be it from me, to pretend to more sensibility than Christopher North, or Izaàk Walton. The latter had his humanities; and Wilson, of all the men I have ever seen, carries, most marked in his fine face, the philter which bewitches affection. But, emulous as I am of their fame as anglers, and modest as I should feel at introducing innovations upon an art so refined, I must venture upon some less primitive instrument than thumb and finger, for the dismemberment of worms. I must take scissors.

I had never seen a trout caught, in my life, and I do not remember at this moment ever having, myself, caught a fish, of any genus or gender. My first lesson, of course, was to see the thing done. F. stole up to the bank of the stream, as if his tread might wake a naiad, and threw his fly into a circling, black pool, sparkling with brilliant bubbles, which coiled away from a small brook-leap in the shade. The same instant the rod bent, and a glittering spotted creature rose into the air, swung to his hand, and was dropped into the basket. Another fling, and a small trail of the fly on the water, and another followed. With the third, I felt a curious uneasiness in my elbow, extending quickly

to my wrist—the tingling of a new-born enthusiasm. F. had taken *up* the stream, and, with his lips apart, and body bent over, like a mortal surprising some troop of fays at revel, it was not reasonable to expect him to remember his pupil. So, silently I turned *down*, and at the first pool threw in my fly. Something bright seemed born at the instant under it, and the slight tilting pull upon the pole took me so much by surprise, that, for a second, I forgot to raise it. Up came the bright trout, raining the silver water from his back, and, at the second swing through the air, (for I had not yet learned the sleight of the fisher to bring him quick to hand,) he dropped into the pool, and was gone. I had already begun to take his part against myself, and detected a pleased thrill, at his escape, venturing through my bosom. I sat down upon a prostrate pine, to new-Shylock my poor worm. The tin box was in F.'s pocket! Come! here was a relief. As to the wild-wood worms that might be dug from the pine-tassels under my feet, I was incapable of violating their forest sanctuary. I would fish no more. I had had my pleasure. It is not like pulling up a stick or a stone, to pull up a resisting trout. It is a peculiar sensation, unimaginable till felt. I should like to be an angler very well, *but for the worm in my pocket.*

The brook at my feet, and, around me, pines of the tallest lift, by thousands! You may *travel through* a forest, and look upon these communicants with the sky, as trees. But you cannot *sit still* in a forest, alone and silent, without feeling the awe of their presence. Yet the brook ran and sang as merrily, in their black shadow, as in the open sunshine; and the woodpecker played his sharp hammer on a tree evergreen for centuries, as fearlessly as on a shivering poplar, that will be outlived by such a fish-catcher

as I. Truly, this is a world in which there is small recognition of greatness. As it is in the forest, so it is in the town. The very gods would have their toes trod upon, if they walked without their wings. Yet let us take honor to ourselves above vegetables. The pine beneath me has been a giant, with his top in the clouds, but lies now unvalued on the earth. *We* recognize greatness *when it is dead.* We are prodigal of love and honor when it is unavailing We are, in something, above wood and stubble.

I have fallen into a sad trick, dear Doctor, of preaching sermons to myself, from these texts of nature. Sometimes, like other preachers, I pervert the meaning and forget the context, but revery would lose its charm if it went by reason. Adieu! Come up to Glenmary, and catch trout if you will. But I will have your worms decently drowned before boxed for use. I cannot sleep o' nights after slipping one of these harmless creatures out of his own mouth, in a vain attempt to pull him asunder.

LETTER V.

My dear Doctor: If this egg hatch without getting cold, or, to accommodate my language to your city apprehension, if the letter I here begin comes to a finishing, it will be *malgré* blistering hands and weary back—the consequences of hard raking—of *hay*. The men are taking their four o'clock of cheese and cider in the meadow, and, not having simplified my digestion as rapidly as my habits, I have retired to the shelter of the bridge, to be decently rid of the master's first bit and pull at the pitcher. After employing my brains in vain, to discover why this particular branch of farming should require cider and cheese, (eaten together at no other season that I can learn,) I have pulled out my scribble-book from the niche in the sleeper overhead, and find, by luck, one sheet of *tabula rasa*, upon which you are likely to pay eighteen pence to Amos Kendall.

Were you ever in a hay-field, Doctor? I ask for information. Metaphorically, I know you "live in clover"—meaning the society of wits, and hock of a certain vintage—but seriously, did you ever happen to stand on the natural soil of the earth, off the pavement? If you have not, let me tell you it is a very pleasant change. I have always fancied there was a mixture of the

vegetable in myself; and I am convinced, now, that there is something in us which grows more thriftily on fresh earth, than on flag-stones. There are some men indigenous to brick and mortar, as there are plants which thrive best with a stone on them; but there are "connecting links" between all the varieties of God's works, and such men verge on the mineral kingdom. I have seen whole geodes of them, with all the properties of flints, for example. But in you, my dear Doctor, without flattery, I think I see the vegetable, strong, though latent. You would thrive in the country, well planted and a little pruned. I am not sure it would do to *water* you freely—but you want sunshine and fresh air, and a little bird to shake the "dew" out of your top.

I see, from my seat under the bridge, a fair meadow, laid like an unrolled carpet of emerald along the windings of a most bright and swift river. The first owner of it, after the savage, all honor to his memory, sprinkled it with forest trees, now at their loftiest growth, here and there one, stately in the smooth grass, like a polished monarch on the foot-cloth of his throne. The river is the Owaga, and its opposite bank is darkened with thick wood, through which a liberal neighbor has allowed me to cut an eye-path to the village spire—a mile across the fields. From my cottage door, across this meadow-lawn, steals, with silver foot, the brook I redeemed from its lost strayings, and, all along between brook and river, stand haycocks, not fairies. Now, possess me as well of your whereabout—what you see from your window in Broadway! Is there a sapling on my whole farm that would change root-hold with you?

The hay is heavy this year, and if there were less, I should still feel like taking my hat off tc the meadow. There is nothing

like living in the city, to impress one with the gratuitous liberality of the services rendered one in the country. Here are meadows now, that, without hint or petition, pressing or encouragement, pay or consideration, nay, careless even of gratitude, shoot me up some billions of grass-blades, clover-flowers, white and red, and here and there a nodding regiment of lilies, tall as my chin; and it is understood, I believe, that I am welcome to it all. Now, you may think this is all easy enough, and the meadow is happy to be relieved; but so the beggar might think of your alms, and be as just. But you have made the money you give him by the sweat of your brow. So has the meadow its grass. "It is estimated," says the Book of Nature, "that an acre of grass-land transpires, in twenty-four hours, not less than six thousand four hundred quarts of water." Sweat me that without a fee, thou dollar a visit!

Here comes William from the post, with a handful of papers. The Mirror, with a likeness of Sprague. A likeness in a mirror could scarce fail, one would think, and here, accordingly he is—the banker-poet, the Rogers of our country—fit as "himself to be his parallel." Yet I have never seen that stern look on him. We know he bears the "globe"* on his back, like old Atlas, but he is more urbane than the world-bearer. He keeps a muscle unstrained for a smile. A more courteous gentleman stands not by Mammon's altar—no, nor by the lip of Helicon—yet this is somewhat stern. In what character, if you please, Mr. Harding? Sat Plutus, or Apollo, astride your optic nerve when you drew that picture? It may be a look he has,

* Mr. Sprague is cashier of the Globe Bank, in Boston.

but, fine head as it stands on paper, they who form from it an idea of the man, would be agreeably disappointed in meeting him. And this, which is a merit in most pictures, is a fault in one which posterity is to look at.

Sprague has the reputation of being a most able financier. Yet he is not a rich man—best evidence in the world that he puts his genius into his calculations, for it is the nature of uncommon gifts to do good to all but their possessor. That he is a poet, and a true and high one, has been not so much acknowledged by criticism, as *felt* in the republic. The great army of editors, who paragraph upon one name, as an entry of college-boys will play upon one flute, till the neighborhood would rather listen to a voluntary on shovel and tongs, have not made his name diurnal and hebdomadal; but his poetry is diffused by more unjostled avenues, to the understandings and hearts of his countrymen. I, for one, think he is a better banker for his genius, as with the same power he would have made a better soldier, statesman, farmer, what you will. I have seen excellent poetry from the hand of Plutus—(Biddle, I should have said, but I never scratch out, to you)—yet he has but ruffled the muse, while Sprague has courted her. Our Theodore,* *bien-aimé*, at the court of Berlin, writes a better dispatch, I warrant you, than a fellow born of red tape and fed on sealing-wax at the department. I am afraid the genius of poor John Quincy Adams is more limited. He is only the best president we have had since Washington—not a poet, though he has a volume in press. Briareus is not the father of all who will have a niche. Shelley would have made

* Theodore Fay, secretary of the American embassy to Prussia.

an unsafe banker, for he was prodigal of stuff. Pope, Rogers, Crabbe, Sprague, Halleck, waste no gold, even in poetry. Every idea gets his due of those poets, and no more; and Pope and Crabbe, by the same token, would have made as good bankers as Sprague and Rogers. We are under some mistake about genius, my dear Doctor. I'll just step in-doors, and find a definition of it in the library.

Really, the sun is hot enough, as Sancho says, to fry the brains in a man's skull.

"Genius," says the best philosophical book I know of, "wherever it is found, and to whatever purpose directed, is mental power. It distinguishes the man of *fine phrensy*, as Shakspeare expresses it, from the man of *mere phrensy*. It is a sort of instantaneous insight, that gives us knowledge without going to school for it. Sometimes it is directed to one subject, sometimes to another; but under whatever form it exhibits itself, it enables the individual who possesses it, to make a wonderful, and almost miraculous progress in the line of his pursuit."

Si non é vero, é ben trovato. If philosophy were more popular, we should have Irving for president, Halleck for governor of Iowa, and Bryant envoy to Texas. But genius, to the multitude, is a phantom without mouth, pockets, or hands—incapable of work, unaccustomed to food, ignorant of the uses of coin, and unfit candidate, consequently, for any manner of loaves and fishes. A few more Spragues would leaven this lump of narrow prejudice.

I wish you would kill off your patients, dear Doctor, and contrive to be with us at the agricultural show. I flatter myself I shall take the prize for turnips. By the way, to answer your question while I think of it, that is the reason why I am not at

Niagara, "taking a look at the viceroy." I must watch my turnipling. I met Lord Durham once or twice when in London, and once at dinner at Lady Blessington's. I was excessively interested, on that occasion, by the tactics of D'Israeli, who had just then chipped his political shell, and was anxious to make an impression on Lord Durham, whose glory, still to come, was confidently foretold in that bright circle. I rather fancy the dinner was made to give Vivian Grey the chance; for her ladyship, benevolent to every one, has helped D'Israeli to "imp his wing," with a devoted friendship, of which he should imbody, in his maturest work, the delicacy and fervor. Women are glorious friends to stead ambition; but effective as they all can be, few have the tact, and fewer the varied means, of the lady in question. The guests dropped in, announced but unseen, in the dim twilight; and, when Lord Durham came, I could only see that he was of middle stature, and of a naturally cold address. Bulwer spoke to him, but he was introduced to no one—a departure from the custom of that *maison sans-géne*, which was either a tribute to his lordship's reserve, or a *ruse* on the part of Lady Blessington, to secure to D'Israeli the advantage of having his acquaintance sought—successful, if so; for Lord Durham, after dinner, requested a formal introduction to him. But for D'Orsay, who sparkles, as he does everything else, out of rule, and in splendid defiance of others' dullness, the soup and the first half hour of dinner would have passed off, with the usual English fashion of earnest silence. I looked over my spoon at the future premier—a dark, saturnine man, with very black hair, combed very smooth—and wondered how a heart, with the turbulent ambitions, and disciplined energies which were stirring, I knew, in his, could be

concealed under that polished and marble tranquillity of mien and manner. He spoke to Lady Blessington in an under-tone, replying with a placid serenity that never reached a smile, to so much of D'Orsay's champagne wit as threw its sparkle in his way, and Bulwer and D'Israeli were silent altogether. I should have foreboded a dull dinner if, in the open brow, the clear sunny eye, and unembarrassed repose of the beautiful and expressive mouth of Lady Blessington, I had not read the promise of a change. It came presently. With a tact, of which the subtle ease and grace can in no way be conveyed into description, she gathered up the cobweb threads of conversation going on at different parts of the table, and by the most apparent accident, flung them into D'Israeli's fingers, like the ribands of a four-in-hand. And, if so coarse a figure can illustrate it, he took the whip-hand like a master. It was an appeal to his opinion on a subject he well understood, and he burst at once, without preface, into that fiery rein of eloquence which, hearing many times after, and always with new delight, have stamped D'Israeli on my mind as the most wonderful talker I have ever had the fortune to meet. He was anything but a declaimer. You would never think him on stilts. If he catches himself in a rhetorical sentence, he mocks at it in the next breath. He is satirical, contemptuous, pathetic, humorous, everything in a moment; and his conversation on any subject whatever, embraces the *omnibus rebus, et quibusdam aliis.* Add to this, that D'Israeli's is the most intellectual face in England—pale, regular, and overshadowed with the most luxuriant masses of raven-black hair; and you will scarce wonder that, meeting him for the first time, Lord Durham was, (as he was expected to be by the Aspasia of that London Academe,) impressed.

He was not carried away as we were. That would have been unlike Lord Durham. He gave his whole mind to the brilliant meteor blazing before him ; but the telescope of judgment was in his hand—to withdraw at pleasure. He has evidently, native to his blood, that great quality of a statesman—*retenu.* D'Israeli and he formed at the moment a finely contrasted picture. Understanding his game perfectly, the author deferred, constantly and adroitly, to the opinion of his noble listener, shaped his argument by his suggestions, allowed him to say nothing without using it as the nucleus of some new turn to his eloquence; and all this, with an apparent effort against it, as if he had desired to address himself exclusively to Lady Blessington, but was compelled, by a superior intellectual magnetism, to turn aside and pay homage to her guest. With all this instinctive management there was a flashing *abandon* in his language and choice of illustration, a kindling of his eye, and, what I have before described, a positive foaming at his lips, which, contrasted with the warm but clear and penetrating eye of Lord Durham, his calm yet earnest features, and lips closed without compression, formed, as I said, a picture, and of an order worth remembering in poetry. Without meaning any disrespect to D'Israeli, whom I admire as much as any man in England, I remarked to my neighbor, a celebrated artist, that it would make a glorious drawing of Satan tempting an archangel to rebel.

Well—D'Israeli is in Parliament, and Lord Durham on the last round but one of the ladder of *subject* greatness. The viceroy will be premier, no doubt; but it is questionable if the author of Vivian Grey does more than carry out the moral of his own tale. Talking at a brilliant table, with an indulgent and

superb woman on the watch for wit and eloquence, and rising in the face of a cold, common-sense House of Commons, on the look-out for froth and humbug, are two different matters. In a great crisis, with the nation in a tempest, D'Israeli would flash across the darkness very finely—but he will never do for the calm right-hand of a premier. I wish him, I am sure, every success in the world; but I trust that whatever political reverses fall to his share, they will drive him back to literature.

I have written this last sentence in the red light of sunset, and I must be out to see my trees watered, and my kine driven a-field after their milking. What a coverlet of glory the day-god draws about him for his repose! I should like curtains of that burnt crimson. If I have a passion in the world, it is for that royal trade, upholstery; and so thought George the Fourth, and so thinks Sultan Mahmoud, who, with his own henna-tipped fingers, assisted by his assembled harem, arranges every fold of drapery in the seraglio. If poetry fail, I'll try the profession some day *en grand*, and meantime let me go out and study one of the three hundred and sixty-five varieties of couch-drapery in the west.

LETTER VI.

My dear Doctor: Your letter contained

> "a few of the unpleasantest words
> That e'er were writ on paper!"

Why should you not pass August at Glenmary? Have your patients bought you, body and soul? Is there no "night-bell" in the city but yours? Have you no practice in the country, my dear Esculapius? Faith! I'll be ill! By the time you reach here, I shall be a "case." I have not had a headache now in twenty years, and my constitution requires a change. I'll begin by eating the cucumbers we had saved for your visit, and you know the consequences. Mix me a pill for the cholera—first, second, or third stage of the disease, according to your speed—and come with what haste you may. If you arrive too late, you lose your fee, but I'll return your visit, by the honor of a ghost.

By the way, as a matter of information, do you *charge* in such cases? Or, the man being dead, do you deduct for not feeling his pulse, nor telling him the name of his damaged organ in Latin? It should be half-price, I think—these items off. Let me know by express mail, as one likes to be prepared.

Since I wrote to you, I have added the Chemung river to my list of acquaintances. It was done *a l'improvista,* as most pleasant things are. We were driving to the village on some early errand, and met a friend at the cross-roads, bound with an invalid to Avon Springs. He was driving his own horses, and proposed to us to set him a day's journey on his way. I had hay to cut, but the day was made for truants—bright, breezy, and exhilarating; and, as I looked over my shoulder, the only difficulty vanished, for there stood a pedlar chaffering for a horn-comb with a girl at a well. We provided for a night's toilet from his tin-box, and, easing off the check-reins a couple of holes, to enlighten my ponies as to the change in their day's work, we struck into the traveller's trot, and sped away into the eye of a southwest breeze, happy as urchins when the schoolmaster is on a jury.

When you come here, I shall drive you to the *Narrows* of the Susquehannah. That is a word, *nota bene,* which, in this degree of latitude, refers not at all to the breadth of the stream. It is a place where the mountain, like many a frowning coward, threatens to crowd its gentler neighbor, but gives room at its calm approach, and annoys nobody but the passer-by. The road between them, as you come on, looks etched with a thumb-nail along the base of the cliff, and you would think it a pokerish drive, making no allowance for perspective. The friable rock, however, makes rather a smooth single track; and if you have the inside when you meet Farmer Giles or the stage-coach, you have only to set your hub against the rock, and "let them go by as likes." The majestic and tranquil river sweeps into the peaked shadow, and on again, with the disdain of a beauty used to con-

quer. It reminded me of Lady Blessington's "do if you dare!" when the mob at the House of Lords threatened to break her chariot windows. There was a calm courage in Miladi's French glove that carried her through, and so, amid this mob of mountains, glides the Susquehannah to the sea.

While I am here, let me jot down an observation worthy the notice of Mr. Capability Brown. This cliff falls into a line of hills running from northwest to southeast, and, by five in the summer afternoon, their tall shoulders have nudged the sun, and the long, level road at their bases lies in deep shadow, for miles along the Owaga and Susquehannah. "Consequence is," as my friend of the "Albany Daily," says, we can steal a march upon twilight, and take a cool drive before tea. What the ruination shops on the west side of Broadway are, to you, this spur of the Alleghanies is, to me, (minus the plate-glass, and the temptations.) I value this—for the afternoons in July and August are hot and long; the breeze dies away, the flies get in-doors, and, with the desire for motion, yet no ability to stir, one longs for a ride with Ariel through "the veins o' the earth." Mr. C. Brown, now, would mark me down, for this privilege of road well shaded, some twenty pound in the rent. He is a man in England who trades upon his taste. He goes to your country-seat to tell you what can be done with it—what are its unimproved advantages, what to do with your wood, and what with your water. He would rate this shady mountain as an eligibility in the site, to be reckoned, of course, as income. A very pleasant man is Mr. Brown!

It occurs to me, Doctor, that a new branch of this gentleman's profession might be profitable. Why not set up a shop to tell *people* what they can make of themselves? I have a great mind

to take out a patent for the idea. The stock in trade would be two chairs and a green curtain—(for taste, like rouge, should be sold privately)—not expensive. I would advertise to see gentlemen in the morning, ladies in the evening, "secrecy in all cases strictly observed." Few people of either sex know their own style. Your Madonna is apt to romp, for instance, and your romp to wear her hair plain and a rosary. Few ladies know what colors they look best in—whether smiles or tears are most becoming, whether they appear to most advantage sitting, like Queen Victoria and Tom Moore, (and this involves a delicate question,) or, standing and walking. The world is full of people who *mistake their style*—fish for your net, every one. How many women are never charming till they forget themselves! A belle is a woman who knows her weapons—colors, smiles, moods, caprices; who has looked at her face in the glass, like an artist, and knows what will lighten a defect or enhance a beauty. The art is as rare as the belle. "*Pourquoi?* my dear knight." Because taste is, where knowledge was before the discovery of printing—locked up with the first possessor. Why should it not be diffused? What a refuge for reduced gentility would be such a vocation! What is now the disease of fortunes would be then their remedy; parents would cultivate a taste for eloquence in their children, because there is no knowing what they may come to—the reason, now, why they take pains to repress it.

I presume it is in consequence of the diffusion of printing that ignorance of the law is no apology for crime. Were taste within reach of all, (there might be dispensaries for the poor,) that "shocking bad hat" of yours, my dear Doctor, would be a criminal offence. Our fat friend with the long-tailed coat, and the

waist at his shoulder-blades, would be liable to fine for misinforming the tailor as to the situation of his hips—the tailor of course not to blame, having nothing to go by. Two scandalous old maids together would be abated as a nuisance—as it is the *quantity* of tin pots, which, in a concert upon that tintinnabulary instrument, constitutes a disturbance of the peace. The reform would be endless. I am not sure it could be extended to bad taste in literature, for, like rebellion, the crime would merge in the universality of the offenders. But it would be the general putting down of tame monsters, now loose on society. *Pensez y!*

What should you think of dining, with a woman behind your chair worth seven hundred thousand pounds sterling—well invested? You may well stare—but unless a large number of sensible people are very much mistaken, you may do so, any day, for some three shillings, at a small inn on the Susquehannah. Those who know the road, leave behind them a showy, porticoed tavern, new, and carefully divested of all trees and grass, and pull up at the door of the old inn at the place—a low, old-fashioned house, built on a brook-side, and with all the appearance of a comfortable farm-house, save only a leaning and antiquated sign-post. Here lives a farmer well off in the world, a good-natured old man, who for some years has not meant to keep open tavern; but from the trouble of taking down his sign-post, or the habit, and acquaintance with travellers, gives all who come what chance fare may be under the roof, and at the old prices common in days when the bill was not ridden by leagues of white paint and portico. His dame, the heiress, is a tall and erect woman of fifty, ("or, by'r lady, threescore,") a smiling, intelligent, ready hostess, with the natural manners of

a gentlewoman. Now and then, a pale daughter, unmarried, and twenty-four or younger, looks into the white-washed parlor, and, if the farmer is home from the field, he sits down with his hat on, and lends you a chat with a voice sound and hearty as the smell of hay. It is altogether a pleasant place to loiter away the noon; and though it was early for dinner when we arrived, we put up our horses, (the men were all a-field,) and Dame Raymond spread her white cloth, and set on her cherry-pie, while her daughter broiled for us the *de quoi* of the larder, in the shape of a salt mackerel. The key of the "bin" was in her pocket, and we were young enough, the dame said, as she gave it to us, to feed our own horses. This good woman, or this great lady, is the only daughter, as I understand it, of an old farmer, ninety years of age, who has fallen heir to an immense fortune in England. He was traced out, several years ago, by the executors, and the proper testimonials of the property placed in his hands; but he was old, and his child was well off and happy, and he refused to put himself to any trouble about it. Dame Raymond, herself, thought England a great way off; and the pride of her life is her fine chickens; and to go so far upon the strength of a few letters, leaving the farm and hen-roost to take care of themselves, was an undertaking which, she felt, justified Farmer Raymond in shaking his head. Lately, an enterprising gentleman in the neighborhood has taken the papers, and she consented to write to her father, who willingly made over to her all authority in the matter. The claim, I understand, is as well authenticated as paper evidence can make it, and the probability is, that, in a few months, Dame Raymond, will be more troubled with her riches than she ever was with her chickens.

We dined at our leisure, and had plenty of sharp gossip with the tall hostess, who stood to serve the tea from a side-table, and, between our cups, kept the flies from her tempting cherry-pie and brown sugar, with a large fan. I have not often seen a more shrewd and sensible woman, and she laughs and philosophizes about her large fortune in a way that satisfied me she would laugh just as cheerily if it should turn out a bubble She said her husband had told her "it was best not to be proud, till she got her money." The only symptom that I detected, of castle-building, was a hint she let slip of hoping to entertain travellers, some day, in a better house. I coupled this with another remark, and suspected that the new tavern, with its big portico and blazing sign, had not taken the wind out of her sails without offence, and that, perhaps, the only use of her money, on which she had determined, was to build a bigger, and eclipse the intruder.

I amused myself with watching her as she bustled about with old-fashioned anxiety to anticipate our wants, and fancying the changes to which the acquisition of this immense fortune might introduce her in England. There was her daughter, whom a little millinery would improve into a very presentable heiress, cooking our mackerel; while Mrs. Thwaites, the grocer's widow in London, with no more money probably, was beset by half the unmarried noblemen in England—Lord Lyndhurst, it is said, the most pressing. But speculation is endless, and you shall go down with your trout line, dear Doctor, and spin your own cobwebs while Dame Raymond cooks your fish.

I have spun out my letter to such a length, that I have left myself no room to prate to you of the beauties of the Chemung;

but you are likely to hear enough of it, for it is a subject with which I am, just now, something enamored. I think you share with me my passion for rivers. If you have the grace to come and visit us, and I survive the cholera you have brought upon me, we will visit this new Naiad in company, and take Dame Raymond in our way. Adieu.

LETTER VII.

I AM of opinion, dear Doctor, that a letter, to be read understandingly, should have marginal references to the state of the thermometer, the condition of the writer's digestion, and the quality of his pen and ink, at the time of writing. These matters, if they do not affect a man's belief in a future state, very sensibly operate upon his style of composition; sometimes (so with me at least) upon his sentiments and minor morals.

Like most other pen-and-inklings in this be-printed country, I commenced authorship at precisely the wrong end—criticism. Never having put my hat upon more than one or two grown-up thoughts, I still felt myself qualified to pronounce upon any man's literary stature, from Walter Scott to whom you please—God forgive me! I remember (under this delusion of Sathan) sitting down to review a book by one of the most sensible women in this country. It was a pleasant morning—favorable symptom for the author. I wrote the name of the book at the head of a clean sheet of Bath post, and the nib of my pen capered nimbly away into a flourish, in a fashion to coax praise out of a pumpkin. What but courtesy on so bright a morning and with so smooth a pen? I was in the middle of the page, taking breath

after a long and laudatory sentence, when, puff! through the window came a gust of air, labelled for the bare nerves. (If you have ever been in Boston, perhaps you have observed that an east wind, in that city of blue noses in June, gives you a sensation like being suddenly deprived of your skin.) In a shudder of disgust I bore down upon the dot of an i, and my pen, like an "over-tried friend," gave way under the pressure. With the wind in that same quarter, dexterity died. After vain efforts to mend my pen to its original daintiness, I amputated the nib to a broad working stump, and aimed it doggedly at the beginning of a new paragraph. But my wits had gone about with the grasshopper on the church-steeple. Nothing would trickle from that stumpy quill, either graceful or gracious; and, having looked through the book but with a view to find matter to praise, I was obliged to run it over anew to forage for the east wind. "Hence the milk in the cocoa-nut," as the showman says of the monkey's stealing children. I wrote a savage review, which, the reader was expected to believe, contained the opinions of the reviewer!! Oh, Jupiter!

All this is to apologize, not for my own letter, which I intend to be a pattern of good humor, but for a passage in your last, (if written upon a hard egg you should have mentioned it in the margin,) in which, apropos of my jaunt to the Chemung, you accuse me of being glad to get away from my hermitage. I could write you a sermon, now, on the nature of content, but you would say the very text is apocryphal. My "lastly," however, would go to prove that there is bigotry in retirement, as in all things either good or pleasurable. The eye, that never grows familiar with nature, needs freshening from all things else.

A room, a chair, a musical instrument, a horse, a dog, the road you drive daily, and the well you drink from, are all more prized when left and returned to. The habit of turning back daily from a certain milestone, in your drive, makes that milestone, after a while, a prison wall. It is pleasant to pass it, though the road beyond be less beautiful. If I were once more "brave Master Shoe-tie, the great traveller," it would irk me, I dare say, to ride thirty miles in a rail-car drawn by one slow horse. Yet it is a pleasant "lark," now, to run down to Ithaca for a night, in this drowsy conveyance, though I exchange a cool cottage for a fly-nest, "lavendered linen" for abominable cotton, and the service of civil William for the "young lady that takes care of the chambers." I like the cobwebs swept out of my eyes. I like to know what reason I have to keep my temper among my household gods. I like to pay an extravagant bill for villainous entertainment abroad, and come back to escape ruin in the luxuries of home.

Doctor! were you ever a vagabond, for years together? I know you have hung your hat on the south pole, but you are one of those "friend of the family" men, who will travel from Dan to Beersheba, and be at no charges for lodging. You cannot understand, I think, the life from which I have escaped—the life of "mine ease in mine inn." Pleasant mockery! You have never had the hotel fever—never sickened of the copperplate human faces met exclusively in those homes of the homeless—never have gone distracted at the eternal "one piece of soap, and the last occupant's tooth-brush and cigar!" To be slighted, any hour of the evening, for a pair of slippers and a tin candlestick—to sleep and wake amid the din of animal wants, complain-

ing and supplied—to hear no variety of human tone but the expression of these baser necessities—to be waited on, either by fellows who would bring your coffin as unconcernedly as your breakfast, or by a woman who is rude, because insulted when kind—to lie always in strange beds—to go *home* to a house of strangers—to be weary without pity, sick without soothing, sad without sympathy—to sit at twilight by your lonely window, in some strange city, and, with a heart which a child's voice would dissolve in tenderness, to see door after door open and close upon fathers, brothers, friends, expected and welcomed by the beloved and the beloving—these are costly miseries against which I almost hourly weigh my cheaper happiness in a home! Yet this is the life pined after by the grown-up boy—the life called fascinating and mystified in romance—the life, dear Doctor, for which even yourself can fancy I am "imping my wing" anew! Oh, no! I have served seven years for this Rachel of contentment, and my heart is no Laban to put me off with a Leah.

"A!" Imagine this capital letter laid on its back, and pointed south by east, and you have a pretty fair diagram of the junction of the Susquehannah and the Chemung. The note of admiration describes a superb line of mountains at the back of the Chemung valley, and the quotation marks express the fine bluffs that overlook the meeting of the waters at Athens. The cross of the letter, (say a line of four miles,) defines a road from one river to the other, by which travellers up the Chemung save the distance to the point of the triangle, and the area between is a broad plain, just now as fine a spectacle of teeming harvest as you would find on the Genesee.

As the road touches the Chemung, you pass under the base

of a round mountain, once shaped like a sugar-loaf, but now with a top o' the fashion of a schoolboy's hat punched in to drink from; the floor-worn edge of the felt answering to a fortification around the rim of the hill, built by —— I should be obliged if you would tell me whom! They call it Spanish Hill, and the fortifications were old at the time of the passing through of Sullivan's army. It is as pretty a fort as my Uncle Toby could have seen in Flanders, and was, doubtless, occupied by gentlemen soldiers long before the Mayflower moored off the rock of Plymouth. The tradition runs that an Indian chief once ascended it to look for Spanish gold; but, on reaching the top, was enveloped in clouds and thunder, and returned with a solemn command from the spirit of the mountain that no Indian should ever set his foot on it again. An old lady, who lives in the neighborhood, (famous for killing two tories with a stone in her stocking,) declares that the dread of this mountain is universal among the tribes, and that nothing would induce a red man to ascend it. This looks as if the sachem had found what he went after; and it is a modern fact, I understand, that a man, hired to plough on the hillside, suddenly left his employer and purchased a large farm, by nobody knows what windfall of fortune. Half this mountain belongs to a gentleman who is building a country-seat on an exquisite site between it and the river, and, to the kindness of his son and daughter, who accompanied us in our ascent, we are indebted for a most pleasant hour, and what information I have given you.

I will slip in, here, a memorandum for any invalid, town-weary person, or new married couple, to whom you may have occasion, in your practice, to recommend change of air The house for-

merly occupied by this gentleman, a roomy mansion, in a commanding and beautiful situation, is now open as an inn; and I know nowhere a retreat so private and desirable. It is near both the Susquehannah and the Chemung, the hills laced with trout-streams, four miles from Athens, and half way between Owego and Elmira. The scenery all about is delicious, and the house well kept, at country charges. My cottage is some sixteen miles off; and if you give any of your patients a letter to me, I will drive up and see them, with a posy and a pot of jelly. You will understand that they must be people who do not "add perfume to the violet"—in my way—simple.

I can in no way give you an idea of the beauty of the Chemung river from Brigham's inn to Elmira. We entered immediately upon the *Narrows*—a spot where the river follows into a curve of the mountain, like an inlaying of silver around the bottom of an emerald cup—the brightest water, the richest foliage—and a landscape of meadow, between the horns of the crescent that would be like the finest park scenery in England, if the boldness of the horizon did not mix with it a resemblance to Switzerland.

We reached Elmira at sunset. What shall I say of it? From a distance, its situation is most beautiful. It lies (since we have begun upon the alphabet) in the tail of a magnificent L, formed by the bright winding of the river. Perhaps the surveyor, instead of deriving its name from his sweetheart, called it *L. mirabile*—corrupted to vulgar comprehension, *Elmira*. If he did not, he might, and I will lend him the etymology.

The town is built against a long island, covered with soft greensward, and sprinkled with noble trees; a promenade of unequalled beauty and convenience, *but* that all which a village can muster

of unsightliness has chosen the face of the river bank "to turn its lining to the sun." Fie on you, Elmira! I intend to get up a memorial to Congress, praying that the banks of rivers, in all towns settled henceforth, shall be government property, to be reserved and planted for public grounds. It was the design of William Penn at Philadelphia, and think what a binding it would have been to his chequer-board. Fancy a pier and promenade along the Hudson at New York! Imagine it a feature of every town in this land of glorious rivers!

There is a singular hotel at Elmira, (big as a state-house, and be-turreted and be-columned according to the most approved system of impossible rent and charges to make it possible,) in the plan of which, curious enough, the *bed-rooms* were entirely forgotten. The house is all parlors and closets! We were shown into superb drawing-rooms, (one for each party,) with pier-glasses, windows to the floor, expensive furniture, and a most polite landlord; and began to think the civilization for which we had been looking east, had stepped over our heads and gone on to the Pacific. Excellent supper and civil service. At dark, two very taper mutton candles set on the superb marble table—but that was but a trifling incongruity. After a call from a pleasant friend or two, and a walk, we made an early request to be shown to our bed-rooms. The "young lady, that sometimes uses a broom for exercise," opened a closet-door with a look of *la voila!* and left us speechless with astonishment. There was a bed of the dimensions of a saint's niche, but no window by which, if stifled, the soul could escape to its destination. Yet here we were, evidently abandoned on a hot night in July, with a door to shut if we thought it prudent, and a candle-wick like an ignited poodle-dog,

to assist in the process of suffocation! I hesitated about calling up the landlord, for, as I said before, he was a most polite and friendly person; and, if we were to give up the ghost in that little room, it was evidently in the ordinary arrangements of the house. "Why not sleep in the parlor?" you will have said. So we did. But, like the king of Spain, who was partly roasted because nobody came to move back the fire, this obvious remedy did not at the instant occur to me. The pier-glass and other splendors of course did duty as bed-room furniture, and, I may say, we slept sumptuously. Our friends in the opposite parlor did as we did, but took the moving of the bed to be, *tout bonnement*, what the landlord expected. I do not think so, yet I was well pleased with him and his entertainment, and shall stop at the "Eagle" invariably—if I can choose my apartment. I am not sure but, in other parts of the house, the bloodthirsty architect has constructed some of these smothering places without parlors. God help the unwary traveller!

Talking of home, (we were at home to dinner the next day,) I wonder whether it is true that adverse fortunes have thrown Mrs. Sigourney's beautiful home into the market. It is offered for sale, and the newspapers say as much. If so, it is pity, indeed. I was there once; and to leave so delicious a spot must, I think, breed a heart-ache. In general, unless the reverse is extreme, compassion is thrown away on those who leave a large house to be comfortable in a small one; but she is a poetess, and a most true and sweet one, and has a property in that house, and in all its trees and flowers, which can neither be bought nor sold. It is robbery to sell it for its apparent value. You can understand, for "your spirit is touched to these fine issues," how a tree that

the eye of genius has rested on, while the mind was at work among its bright fancies, becomes the cradle and home of these fancies. The brain seems driven out of its workshop if you cut it down. So with walks. So with streams. So with the modifications of natural beauty seen thence habitually—sunrise, sunsetting, moonlight. In peculiar places these daily glories take peculiar effects, and in that guise genius becomes accustomed to recognize and love them most. Who can buy this at auction? Who can weave this golden mesh in another tree—give the same voices to another stream—the same sunset to other hills? This fairy property, invisible as it is, is acquired slowly. Habit, long association, the connection with many precious thoughts, (the more precious the farther between,) make it precious. To sell such a spot for its wood and brick, is to value Tom Moore for what he will weigh—Daniel Webster for his superficies. Then there *will* be a time (I trust it is far off) when the property will treble even in saleable value. The bee and the poet must be killed before their honey is tasted. For how much more would Abbotsford sell now than in the lifetime of Scott? For what could you buy Ferney—Burns's cottage—Shakspeare's house at Stratford? I have not the honor of a personal acquaintance with Mrs. Sigourney, and can not judge with what philosophy she may sustain this reverse. But, bear it well or ill, there can be no doubt it falls heavily; and it is one of those instances, I think, where public feeling should be called on to interpose. But in what shape? I have always admired the generosity and readiness with which actors play for the benefit of a decayed "brother of the sock." Let American authors contribute to make up a volume, and let the people of Hartford, who live in the light of

this bright spirit, head the subscription with ten thousand copies. You live among literary people, dear Doctor, and your "smile becomes you better than any man's in all Phrygia." You can set it afloat if you will. My name is among the W's, but I will be ready in my small turn.

"Now God b'wi'you, good Sir Topas!" for on this sheet there is no more room, and I owe you but one. Correspondence, like thistles, "is not blown away till it hath got too high a top." Adieu

LETTER VIII.

My dear Doctor: What can keep you in town during this insufferable hot solstice? I can not fancy, unless you shrink from a *warm* welcome in the country. It is too hot for enthusiasm, and I have sent the cart to the hay-field, and crept under the bridge in my slippers, as if I had found a day to be idle, though I promised myself to see the harvest home, without missing sheaf or winrow. Yet it must be cooler here than where you are, for I see accounts of drought on the sea-board, while, with us, every hot noon has bred its thunder-shower, and the corn on the dry hill-sides is the only crop not kept back by the moisture. Still, the waters are low, and the brook at my feet has depleted to a slender vein, scarce stouter than the pulse that flutters under your thumb in the slightest wrist in your practice. My lobster is missing—probably gone to "the springs." My swallowlets too, who have, "as it were, eat paper and drunk ink," have flitted since yesterday, like illiterate gipseys, leaving no note of their departure. "Who shall tell Priam so, or Hecuba?" The old swallows circle about as if they expected them again. Heaven send they are not in some crammed pocket in that red school-house, unwilling listeners to that vexed alphabet, or, perhaps, squeezed to death in the varlet's perplexity at crooked S.

I have blotted that last sentence like a school-boy, but, between the beginning and the end of it, I have lent a neighbor my side-hill plough, besides answering, by the way, rather an embarrassing question. My catechiser lives above me on the *drink*, (his name for the river,) and is one of those small farmers, common here, who live without seeing money from one year's end to the other. He never buys; he *trades*. He takes a bag of wheat, or a fleece, to the village for salt fish and molasses, pays his doctor in corn or honey, and "changes work" with the blacksmith, the saddler, and the shoemaker. He is a shrewd man withal, likes to talk, and speaks Yankee of the most Bœotian fetch and purity. Imagine a disjointed-looking Enceladus, in a homespun sunflower-colored coat, and small yellow eyes, expressive of nothing but the merest curiosity, looking down on me by throwing himself over the railing like a beggar's wallet of broken meats.

"Good morning, Mr. Willis*y*!"

From hearing my name first used in the possessive case, probably, (Willis's farm or cow,) he regularly throws me in that last syllable.

"Ah! good morning!" (Looking up at the interruption, I made that unsightly blot which you have just excused.)

"You aint got no side-hill plough?"

"Yes, I have, and I'll lend it to you with pleasure."

"Wal! you're darn'd quick. I warnt a go'n' to ask you quite yet. Writin' to your folks at hum?"

"No!"

"Making out a lease?"

"No!"

"How you do spin it off! You haint always work'd on a farm, have ye?"

It is a peculiarity, (a redeeming peculiarity, I think,) of the Yankees, that, though their questions are rude, they are never surprised if you do not answer them. I did not feel that the thermometer warranted me in going into the history of my life to my overhanging neighbor, and I busied myself in crossing my t's and dotting my i's very industriously. He had a maggot in his brain, however, and must e'en be delivered of it. He pulled off a splinter or two from under the bridge with his long arms, and, during the silence, William came to me with a message, which he achieved with his English under-tone of respect.

"Had to lick that boy some, to make him so darn'd civil, hadn't ye?"

"You have a son about his age, I think?"

"Yes; but I guess he couldn't be scared to talk that way. What's the critter 'feard on?"

No answer.

"You haint been a minister, have ye?"

"No!"

"Wal! they talk a heap about your place. *I say, Mr. Willisy, you aint nothing particular, be ye?*"

You should have seen, dear Doctor, the look of eager and puzzled innocence with which this rather difficult question was delivered. Something or other had evidently stimulated my good neighbor's curiosity, but whether I had been blown up in a steamboat, or had fatted a prize pig, or what was my claim to the *digito monstrari*, it was more than half his errand to discover. I have put down our conversation, I believe, with the accuracy of a shorthand writer. Now, is not this a delicious world, in which, out of a museum, and neither stufled nor muzzled, you may find such

an Arcadian? What a treasure he would be to those ancient mariners of polite life, who exist but to tell you of their little peculiarities!

I have long thought, dear Doctor, and this reminds me of it, that there were two necessities of society, unfitted with a vocation. (If you know any middle-aged gentleman out of employment, I have no objection to your reserving the suggestion for a private charity, but otherwise, I would communicate it to the world as a new light.) The first is a luxury which no hotel should be without, no neighborhood, no thoroughfare, no editor's closet. I mean a professed, salaried, stationary, and confidential *listener*. Fancy the comfort of such a thing. There should be a well-dressed, silent gentleman, for instance, pacing habitually the long corridor of the Astor, with a single button on his coat, of the size of a door-handle. You enter in a violent hurry, or with a mind tenanted to suit yourself; and some *fainéant* babbler, weary of his emptiness, must needs take you aside, and rob you of two mortal hours, more or less, while he tells you his tale of nothing. If "a penny saved is a penny got," what a value it would add to life to be able to transfer this leech of precious time, by laying his hand politely on the large button of the listener! "Finish your story to this gentleman!" quoth you. Then, again, there is your unhappy man in hotels, newly arrived, without an acquaintance save the crisp and abbreviating bar-keeper, who wanders up and down, silent-sick, and more solitary in the crowd about him than the hermit on the lone column of the temple of Jupiter. What a mercy to such a sufferer to be able to step to the bar, and order a listener! Or, to send for him with a bottle of wine when dining *alone*, (most particularly alone,) at a table

of two hundred! Or, to ring for him in number four hundred and ninety-three, of a rainy Sunday, with punch and cigars! I am deceived in Stetson of the Astor, if he is not philosopher enough to see the value of this suggestion. "Baths in a house, and a respectable listener if desired," would be an attractive advertisement, let me promise you!

The other vocation to which I referred, would be that of a sort of ambulant dictionary, to be used mostly at evening parties. It should be a gentleman not distinguishable from the common animated wall-flower, except by some conventional sign, as a bit of blue riband in his button-hole. His qualifications should be to know all persons moving in the circle, and something about them—to be up, in short, to the town gossip—what Miss Thing's expectations are—who "my friend" is with the dyed mustache—and which of the stout ladies on the sofa are the forecast shadows of coming balls, or the like desirablenesses. There are a thousand invisible cobwebs threaded through society, which the stranger is apt to cross *à travers*—committing his enthusiasm, for instance, to the deaf ears of a *fiancée;* or, from ignorance, losing opportunities of knowing the clever, the witty, and the famous—all of whom look, at a first glance, very much like other people. The gentleman with the blue riband, you see, would remedy all this. You might make for him after you bow to the lady of the house, and in ten minutes put yourself *au courant* of the entire field. You might apply to him (if you had been absent to Santa Fé or the Pyramids) for the last new shibboleth, the town rage, the name of the new play or poem, the form and color of the freshest change in the kaleidoscope of society. It is not uncommon for sensible people to retire, and "sweep and garnish" their self-respect in a

month's seclusion. It is some time before they become advised again of what it is necessary to know of the follies of the hour. The graceful yet bitter wit, the unoffending yet pointed rally, the confidence which colors all defeats like successes, are delicate weapons, the dexterity at which depends much on familiarity with the ground. What an advent to the diffident and the embarrassed would be such a profession! How many persons of wit and spirit there are, in society, blank for lack of confidence, who, with such a friend in the corner, would come out like magic-ink to the fire! "*Ma hardiesse,*" (says the aspiring rocket,) "*vient de mon ardeur!*" But the device would lose its point did it take a jack-o'-lantern for a star. Mention these little hints to your cleverest female friend, dear Doctor. It takes a woman to introduce an innovation.

Since I wrote to you, I have been adopted—by perhaps the most abominable cur you will see in your travels. I mention it to ward off the first impression—for a dog gives a character to a house; and I would not willingly have a friend light on such a monster in my premises without some preparation. His first apparition was upon a small floss carpet at the foot of an ottoman, the most luxurious spot in the house, of which he had taken possession with a quiet impudence that perfectly succeeded. A long, short-legged cur, of the color of spoiled mustard, with most base tail and erect ears—villanous in all his marks. Rather a dandy gentleman, from New York, was calling on us when he was discovered, and, presuming the dog to be his, we forbore remark; and, assured by this chance indulgence, he stretched himself to sleep. The indignant outcry with which the gentleman disclaimed all knowledge of him, disturbed his slumber; and, not to leave

us longer in doubt, he walked confidently across the room, and seated himself between my feet, with a canine freedom I had never seen exhibited, except upon most familiar acquaintance. I saw clearly that our visitor looked upon *my* disclaimer as a "fetch." It would have been perilling my credit for veracity to deny the dog. So no more was said about him, and since that hour he has kept himself cool in my shadow. I have tried to make him over to the kitchen, but he will neither feed nor stay with them. I can neither outrun him on horseback, nor lose him by crossing ferries. Very much to the discredit of my taste, I am now never seen without this abominable follower—and there is no help for it, unless I kill him, which, since he loves me, would be worse than shooting the albatross; besides, I have at least a drachm (three scruples) of Pythagoreanism in me, and "fear to kill woodcock, lest I dispossess the soul of my grandam." I shall look to the papers to see what friend I have lost in Italy, or the East. I can think of some who might come to me thus.

Adieu, dear Doctor. Send me a good name for my cur—for since he will have me, why I must needs be his, and he shall be graced with an appellation. I think his style of politics might be worth something in love. If I were the lady, it would make a fair beginning. But I will waste no more ink upon you.

LETTER IX.

My dear Doctor: As they say an oyster should be pleased with his apotheosis in a certain sauce, I was entertained with the cleverness of your letter, though you made minced meat of my trout-fishing. Under correction, however, I still cover the barb of my "fly," and so I must do, till I can hook my trout if he but graze the bait with his whisker. You are an alumnus of the gentle science, in which I am but a neophyte, and your fine rules presuppose the dexterity of a practiced angler. Now a trout (I have observed, in my small way) will jump *once* at your naked fly; but if he escape, he will have no more on 't, unless there is a cross of the dace in him. As it is a fish that follows his nose, however, the smell of the worm will bring him to the lure again; and if your awkwardness give him time, he will stick to it till he has cleaned the hook. *Probatum est.*

You may say this is unscientific, but, if I am to breakfast from the contents of my creel, I must be left with my worm and my ignorance.

Besides—hang rules! No two streams are alike—no two men (who are not fools) fish alike. Walton and Wilson would find some new "wrinkle," if they were to try these wild waters; and,

to generalize the matter, I have, out of mathematics, a distrust of rules, descriptions, manuals, etc., amounting to a *'phobia*. Experience was always new to me. I do not seem to myself ever to have seen the Rome I once read of. The Venice I know is not the Venice of story nor of travellers' books. There are two Londons in my mind—one where I saw whole shelves of my library walking about in coats and petticoats, and another where there was nothing visible through the fog but fat men with tankards of porter—one memory of it all glittering with lighted rooms, bright and kind faces, men all manly, and women all womanly; and another memory (got from books) where every man was surly, and dressed in a buff waistcoat, and every woman a giantess, in riding-hat and boots.

It is delightful to think how *new* everything is, spite of description. Never believe, dear Doctor, that there is an old world. There is no such place, on my honor! You will find England, France, Italy, and the East, after all you have read and heard, as altogether new as if they were created by your eye, and were never sung, painted, nor be-written—you will indeed. Why—to be sure—what were the world else? A pawnbroker's closet, where every traveller had left his clothes for you to wear after him! No! no! Thanks to Providence, all things are new! Pen and ink cannot take the gloss off your eyes, nor can any man look through them as you do. I do not believe the simplest matter—sunshine or verdure—has exactly the same look to any two people in the world. How much less a human face—a landscape—a broad kingdom? Travellers are very pleasant people. They tell you what picture was produced in their brain by the things they saw; but, if they forestalled novelty by that,

I would as soon read them as beseech a thief to steal my dinner. *How it looks to one pair of eyes!* would be a good reminder pencilled on the margin of many a volume.

I have run my ploughshare, in this furrow, upon a root of philosophy, which has cured heart-aches for me, ere now. I struck upon it almost accidentally, while administering consolation, years since, to a sensitive friend, whose muse had been consigned, alive and kicking, to the tomb, by a blundering *undertaker* of criticism. I read the review, and wrote on it, with a pencil, "So thinks one man in fifteen millions;" and, to my surprise, up swore my dejected friend, like Master Barnardine, that he would "consent to die that day, for no man's persuasion." Since that, I have made a practice of *counting the enemy;* and, trust me, dear Doctor, it is sometimes worth while not to run away without this little preliminary. A friend, for instance, with a most boding solemnity, takes you aside, and pulls from his pocket a newspaper containing a paragraph that is aimed at your book, your morals, perhaps your looks and manners. You catch the alarm from your friend's face, and fancy it is the voice of public opinion, and your fate is fixed. Your book *is* detestable, your character *is* gone. Your manners and features *are* the object of universal disapprobation. Stay! *count the enemy!* Was it decided by a convention? No! By a caucus? No! By a vote on the deck of a steamboat? No! By a group at the corner of the street, by a club, by a dinner-party? No! By whom then? One small gentleman, sitting in a dingy corner of a printing-office, who puts his quill through your reputation as the entomologist slides a pin through a beetle—in the way of his vocation. No particular malice to *you.* He wanted a specimen of the *genus* poet, and

you were the first caught. If there is no *head* to the pin, (as there often is none,) the best way is to do as the beetle does—pretend to be killed till he forgets you, and then slip off without a buzz.

The only part of calumny that I ever found troublesome, was my friends' insisting on my being unhappy about it. I dare say you have read the story of the German criminal, whose last request, that his head might be struck off while he stood engaged in conversation, was humanely granted by the provost. The executioner was an adroit headsman, and, watching his opportunity, he crept behind his victim while he was observing the flight of a bird, and sliced off his bulb without even discomposing his gaze. It was suggested to the sufferer, presently, that he was decapitated, but he thought not. Upon which, one of his friends stepped up, and, *begging he would take the pains to stir himself a little,* his head fell to the ground. If the story be not true, the moral is. In the many times I have been put to death by criticism, I have never felt incommoded, till some kind friend insisted upon it; and now that I can stand on a potato-hill, in a circle of twice the diameter of a rifle-shot, and warn off all trespassers, I intend to defy sympathy, and carry my top as long as it will stay on—behead me as often as you like, beyond my periphery.

Still though

> "The eagle suffers little birds to sing,
> And is not careful what they mean thereby,"

it is very pleasant, now and then, to pounce upon a bigger bird, screaming in the same chorus. Nothing impairs the dignity of an author's reputation like a newspaper wrangle, yet one bold

literary vulture, struck down promptly and successfully, serves as good a purpose as the hawk nailed to the barn-door. But I do not live in the country to be pestered with resentments. I do not well know how the thoughts of them came under the bridge. I'll have a fence that shall keep out such stray cattle, or there are no posts and rails in philosophy.

There is a little mental phenomenon, dear Doctor, which has happened to me of late so frequently, that I must ask you if you are subject to it, in the hope that your singular talent for analysis will give me the "*pourquoi.*" I mean a sudden novelty in the impression of very familiar objects, enjoyments, etc. For example, did it ever strike you all at once that a tree was a very magnificent production? After looking at lakes and rivers for thirty years, (more or less,) have you ever, some fine morning, caught sight of a very familiar stream, and found yourself impressed with its new and singular beauty? I do not know that the miracle extends to human faces, at least in the same degree. I am *sure* that my old coat is not rejuvenescent. But it is true that, from possessing the *nil admirari* becoming to a "picked man of countries," (acquired with some pains, I may say,) I now catch myself smiling with pleasure to think the river will not all run by; that there will be another sunset to-morrow; that my grain will ripen and nod when it is ripe, and such like every-day marvels. Have we scales that drop off our eyes at a "certain age?" Do our senses renew as well as our bodies, only more capriciously? Have we a chrysalis state, here below, like that *parvenu* gentleman, the butterfly? Still more interesting query —does this delicious novelty attach, later in life, or ever, to objects of affection—compensating for the ravages in the form,

the dullness of the senses, loss of grace, temper, and all outward loveliness? I should like to get you over a flagon of Tokay on that subject.

There is a curious fact, I have learned for the first time in this wild country, and it may be new to you, that, as the forest is cleared, new springs rise to the surface of the ground, as if at the touch of the sunshine. The settler knows that water, as well as herbage, will start to the light, and, as his axe lets it in upon the black bosom of the wilderness, his cattle find both pasture and drink, where, before, there had never been either well-head or verdure. You have yourself been, in your day, dear Doctor, "a warped slip of wilderness," and will see at once that there lies, in this ordinance of Nature, a beautiful analogy to certain moral changes, that come in upon the heels of more cultivated and thoughtful manhood. Of the springs that start up in the footsteps of thought and culture, the sources are like those of forest springs, unsuspected till they flow. There is no divining-rod, whose dip shall tell us at twenty, what we shall most relish at thirty. We do not think that with experience we shall have grown simple; that things we slight and overlook will have become marvels; that our advancement in worth will owe more to the cutting away of overgrowth in tastes than to their acquisition or nurture.

I should have thought this change in myself scarce worth so much blotting of good paper, but for its bearing on a question that has hitherto given me no little anxiety. The rivers flow on to the sea, increasing in strength and glory to the last; but we have our pride and fullness in youth, and dwindle and fall away toward the grave. How I was to grow dull to the ambitions

and excitements which constituted my whole existence—be content to lag and fall behind, and forego emulation in all possible pursuits—in short, how I was to grow old contentedly and gracefully, has been to me somewhat a painful puzzle. With what should I be pleased? How should I fill the vacant halls from which had fled merriment and fancy, and hope, and desire?

You can scarce understand, dear Doctor, with what pleasure I find this new spring in my path—the content with which I admit the conviction, that, without effort or self-denial, the mind may slake its thirst, and the heart be satisfied with but the waste of what lies so near us. I have all my life seen men grow old, tranquilly and content, but I did not think it possible that *I* should. I took pleasure only in that which required young blood to follow, and I felt that, to look backward for enjoyment, would be at best but a difficult resignation.

Now, let it be no prejudice to the sincerity of my philosophy, if, as a corollary, I beg you to take a farm on the Susquehannah, and let us grow old in company. I should think Fate kinder than she passes for, if I could draw you, and one or two others whom we know and "love with knowledge," to cluster about this—certainly one of the loveliest spots in nature, and, while the river glides by unchangingly, shape ourselves to our changes with a helping sympathy. Think of it, dear Doctor! Meantime, I employ myself in my rides, selecting situations on the river banks which I think would be to yours and our friends' liking; and in the autumn, when it is time to transplant, I intend to suggest to the owners where teers might be wanted in case they ever sold, so that you will not lose even a season in your shrubbery, though you delay your decision. Why should w· not renew Arcady? God bless you.

LETTER X.

You may congratulate me on the safe getting in of my harvest, dear Doctor; for I have escaped, as you may say, in a parenthesis. Two of the most destructive hail-storms remembered in this part of the country have prostrated the crops of my neighbors, above and below—leaving not a blade of corn, nor an unbroken window; yet there goes my last load of grain into the barn, well-ripened, and cut standing and fair.

> "Some bright little cherub, that sits up aloft,
> Keeps watch for the soul of poor Peter."

I confess I should have fretted at the loss of my firstlings, more than for a much greater disaster in another shape. I have expended curiosity, watching, and fresh interest upon my uplands, besides plaster and my own labor; and the getting back five hundred bushels for five or ten, has been, to me, through all its beautiful changes from April till now, a wonder to be enjoyed like a play. To have lost the *denouement* by a hail-storm, would be like a play with the fifth act omitted, or a novel with the last leaf torn out. Now, if no stray spark set fire to my barn, I can pick you out the whitest of a thousand sheaves, thrash them with

the first frost, and send you a barrel of Glenmary flour, which shall be, not only very excellent bread, but should have also a flavor of wonder, admiration—all the feelings, in short, with which I have watched it, from seed-time to harvest. Yet there is many a dull dog will eat of it, and remark no taste of *me!* And so there are men who will read a friend's book as if it were a stranger's—but we are not of those. If we love the man, whether we eat a potato of his raising, or read a verse of his inditing, there is in it a sweetness which has descended from his heart—by quill or hoe-handle. I scorn impartiality. If it be a virtue, Death and Posterity may monopolize it for me.

I was interrupted a moment since by a neighbor, who, though innocent of reading and writing, has a coinage of phraseology which would have told in authorship. A stray mare had broken into his peas, and he came to me to write an advertisement for the court-house door. After requesting the owner "to pay charges and take her away," in good round characters, I recommended to my friend, who was a good deal vexed at the trespass, to take a day's work out of her.

"Why, I haint no job on the mounting," said he, folding up the paper very carefully. "It's a *side-hill* critter! Two off legs so lame, she can't stand even."

It was certainly a new idea, that a horse with two spavins on a side, might be used with advantage on a hill farm. While I was jotting it down for your benefit, my neighbor had emerged from under the bridge, and was climbing the railing over my head.

"What will you do if he won't pay damages?" I cried out.

"*Put the types on to him!*" he answered; and, jumping into the road, strided away to post up his advertisement.

I presume, that "to put the types on to" a man, is to send the constable to him with a printed warrant; but it is a good phrase.

The hot weather of the last week has nearly dried up the brook, and, forgetting to water my young trees in the hurry of harvesting, a few of them have hung out the quarantine yellow at the top, and, I fear, will scarce stand it till autumn. Not to have all my hopes in one venture, and that a frail one, I have set about converting a magnificent piece of wild jungle into an academical grove—an occupation that makes one feel more like a viceroy than a farmer. Let me interest you in this metempsychosis; for, if we are to grow old together, as I proposed to you in my last, this grove will lend its shade to many a slippered noontide, and echo, we will hope, the philosophy of an old age, wise and cheerful. Aptly for my design, the shape of the grove is that of the Greek Ω—the river very nearly encircling it; and here, if I live, I will pass the Omega of my life; and, if you will come to the christening, dear Doctor, so shall the grove be named, in solemn ceremony—*The Omega.*

How this nobly-wooded and water-clasped little peninsula has been suffered to run to waste, I know not. It contains some half-score acres of rich interval; and to the neglect of previous occupants of the farm, I probably owe its gigantic trees, as well as its weedy undergrowth, and tangled vines. Time out of mind (five years, in this country) it has been a harbor for woodcocks, wood-ducks, minks, wild bees, humming-birds, and cranes—(two of the latter still keeping possession)—and its labyrinth of tall weeds, interlaced with the low branches of the trees, was seldom penetrated, except once or twice a year by the sportsman, and as often by the Owaga in its freshet. Scarce suspecting the size of

the trees within, whose trunks were entirely concealed, I have looked upon its towering mass of verdure but as a superb emerald wall, shutting the meadows in on the east—and, though within a lance-shot of my cottage, have neglected it, like my predecessors, for more manageable ground.

I have enjoyed very much the planting of young wood, and the anticipation of its shade and splendor in Heaven's slow, but good time. It was a pleasure of Hope; and, to men of leisure and sylvan taste in England, it has been—literature bears witness—a pursuit full of dignity and happiness. But the redemption of a venerable grove from the wilderness, is an enjoyment of another measure. It is a kind of playing of King Lear backward—discovering the old monarch in his abandonment, and sweeping off his unnatural offspring, to bring back the sunshine to his old age, and give him room, with his knights, in his own domain. You know how trees that grow wild near water, in this country, put out foliage upon the trunk as well as the branches, covering it, like ivy, to the roots. It is a beautiful caprice of Nature; but the grandeur of the dark and massive stem is entirely lost—and I have been as much surprised at the giant bodies we have developed, stripping off this unfitting drapery, as Richard at the thews and sinews of the uncowled friar of Copmanhurst.

You can not fancy, if you have never exercised this grave authority, how many difficulties of judgment arise, and how often a jury is wanted to share the responsibility of the irretrievable axe. I am slow to condemn; and the death-blow to a living tree, however necessary, makes my blood start, and my judgment half repent. There are, to-day, several under reprieve—one of

them a beautiful linden, which I can see from my seat under the bridge, nodding just now to the wind, as careless of its doom as if it were sure its bright foliage would flaunt out the summer. In itself it is well worth the sparing and cherishing, for it is full of life and youth—and, could I transplant it to another spot, it would be invaluable. But, though full grown and spreading, it stands among giants, whose branches meet above it at twice its height; and, while it contributes nothing to the shade, its smaller trunk looks a Lilliputian in Brobdignag, out of keeping and proportion. So I think it must come down—and, with it, a dozen in the same category—condemned, like many a wight who was well enough in his place, for being found in too good company.

There is a superstition about the linden, by the way, to which the peculiarity in its foliage may easily have given rise. You may have remarked, of course, that, from the centre of the leaf, starts a slender stem, which bears the linden-flower. Our Saviour is said, by those who believe in the superstition, to have been crucified upon this tree, which has ever since borne the flowering type of the nails driven into it through his palms.

Another, whose doom is suspended, is a ragged sycamore, whose decayed branches are festooned to the highest top by a wild grape-vine, of the most superb fruitfulness and luxuriance. No wife ever pleaded for a condemned husband with more eloquence than these delicate tendrils to me, for the rude tree with whose destiny they are united. I wish you were here, dear Doctor, to say, *spare it,* or *cut it down.* In itself, like the linden, it is a splendid creature; but, alas! it spoils a long avenue of stately trees opening toward my cottage porch, and I fear policy must

outweigh pity. I shall let it stand over Sunday, and fortify myself with an opinion.

Did you ever try your hand, dear Doctor, at this forest-sculpture? It sounds easy enough to trim out a wood, and so it is if the object be merely to produce butternuts, or shade grazing cattle. But to thin, and trim, and cut down, judiciously, changing a "wild and warped slip of wilderness" into a chaste and studious grove, is not done without much study of the spot, let alone a taste for the sylvan. There are all the many effects of the day's light to be observed—how morning throws her shadows, and what protection there is from noon, and where is flung open an aisle to let in the welcome radiance of sunset. There is a view of water to be let through, perhaps, at the expense of trees otherwise ornamental, or an object to hide by shrubbery which is in the way of an avenue. I have lived here as long as this year's grasshoppers, and am constantly finding out something which should have a bearing on the disposition of grounds or the *sculpture* (permit me the word) of my wood and forest. I am sorry to finish "the Omega" without your counsel and taste; but there is a wood on the hill which I will keep, like a cold pie, till you come to us, and we will shoulder our axes and carve it into likelihood together.

And now here comes my Yankee axe (not curtal) which I sent to be ground when I sat down to scrawl you this epistle. As you owe the letter purely to its *dullness*, (and mine,) I must away to a half-felled tree, which I deserted in its extremity. If there were truth in Ovid, what a butcher I were! Yet there is a groan when a tree falls, which sometimes seems to me more than

the sundering cf splinters. Adieu, dear Doctor, and believe that

> "Whate'er the ocean pales or sky inclips
> Is thine,"

if I can give it you by wishing.

LETTER XI.

The box of Rhenish is no substitute for yourself, dear Doctor, but it was most welcome—partly, perhaps, for the qualities it has in common with the gentleman who should have come in the place of it. The one bottle that has fulfilled its destiny, was worthy to have been sunned on the Rhine and drank on the Susquehannah, and I will never believe that anything can come from you that will not improve upon acquaintance. So I shall treasure the remainder for bright hours. I should have thought it superior, even to the Tokay I tasted at Vienna, if other experiments had not apprised me that country life sharpens the universal relish. I think that even the delicacy of the palate is affected by the confused sensations, the turmoil, the vexations of life in town. You will say you have your quiet chambers, where you are as little disturbed by the people around you as I by my grazing herds. But, by your leave, dear Doctor, the fountains of thought (upon which the senses are not a little dependent) will not clear and settle over-night like a well. No—nor in a day, nor in two. You must *live* in the country to possess your bodily sensations, as well as your mind, in tranquil control. It is only when you have forgotten streets and rumors and greetings—forgotten the whip

of punctuality, and the hours of forced pleasures—only when you have cleansed your ears of the din of trades, the shuffle of feet, the racket of wheels, and coarse voices—only when your own voice, accustomed to contend against discords, falls, through the fragrant air of the country, into its natural modulations, in harmony with the low key upon which runs all the music of Nature—only when that part of the world which partook not of the fall of Adam, has had time to affect you with its tranquillity—only then, that the dregs of life sink out of sight, and, while the soul sees through its depths, like the sun through untroubled water, the senses lose their fever and false energy, and play their part, and no more, in the day's expenditure of time and pulsation.

"Still harping on my daughter," you will say; and I will allow that I can scarce write a letter to you without shaping it to the end of attracting you to the Susquehannah. At least, watch when you begin to grow old, and transplant yourself in time to take root, and then we may do as the trees do—defy the weather till we are separated. The oak, itself, if it has grown up with its kindred thick about it, will break if left standing alone; and you and I, dear Doctor, have known the luxury of friends too well to bear the loneliness of an unsympathizing old age. Friends are not pebbles, lying in every path, but pearls gathered with pain, and rare as they are precious. We spend our youth and manhood in the search and proof of them, and, when Death has taken his toll, we have too few to scatter—none to throw away. I, for one, will be a miser of mine. I feel the avarice of friendship growing on me with every year—tightening my hold and extending my grasp. Who, at sixty, is rich in friends? The

richest are those who have drawn this wealth of angels around them, and spent care and thought on the treasuring. Come, my dear Doctor! I have chosen a spot on one of the loveliest of our bright rivers. Here is all that goes to make an Arcadia, except the friendly dwellers in its shade. I will choose your hillside, and plant your grove, that the trees, at least, shall lose no time by your delay. Set a limit to your ambition, achieve it, and come away. It is terrible to grow old amid the jostle and disrespectful hurry of a crowd. The Academy of the philosophers was *out* of Athens. You can not fancy Socrates run against, in the market-place. Respect, which grows wild in the fields, requires watching and management in cities. Let us have an old man's Arcady—where we can slide our "slippered shoon" through groves of our own consecrating, and talk of the world as *without*—ourselves and gay philosophy within. I have strings pulling upon one or two in other lands, who, like ourselves, are not men to let Content walk unrecognized in their path. Slowly, but, I think, surely, they are drawing thitherward; and I have chosen places for *their* hearthstones, too, and shall watch, as I do for you, that the woodman's axe cuts down no tree that would be regretted. If the cords draw well, and Death take but his tithe, my shady "Omega" will soon learn voices to which its echo will for long years be familiar, and the Owaga and Susquehannah will join waters within sight of an *old man's Utopia.*

"My sentiments better expressed" have come in the poet's corner of the Albion to-day—a paper, by the way, remarkable for its good selection of poetry. You will allow that these two verses, which are the closing ones of a piece called "The men of old," are above the common *run* of newspaper *fugitives*:—

"A man's best things are nearest him,
Lie close about his feet;
It is the distant and the dim
That we are sick to greet:
For flowers that grow our hands beneath
We struggle and aspire,
Our hearts must die except we breathe
The air of fresh desire.

But, brothers, who up reason's hill
Advance with hopeful cheer,
Oh, loiter not! those heights are chill,
As chill as they are clear,
And still restrain your haughty gaze—
The loftier that ye go,
Remembering distance leaves a haze
On all that lies below."

The man who wrote that, is hereby presented with the freedom of the Omega.

The first of September, and a frost! The farmers from the hills are mourning over their buckwheat, but the river-mist saves all which lay low enough for its white wreath to cover; and mine, though sown on the hillside, is at mist-mark, and so escaped. Nature seems to intend that I shall take kindly to farming, and has spared my first crop even the usual calamities. I have lost but an acre of corn, I think, and that by the crows, who are privileged marauders, welcome at least to build in the Omega, and take their tithe without rent-day or molestation. I like their noise, though discordant. It is the *minor* in the anthem of Nature —making the gay sound of the blackbird, and the merry chirp of the robin and oriole, more gay and cheerier. Then there is a

sentiment about the raven *family*, and for Shakspeare's lines and his dear sake, I love them.

> "Some say the ravens foster forlorn children
> The while their own birds famish in their nests."

The very name of a good deed shall protect them. Who shall say that poetry is a vain art, or that poets are irresponsible for the moral of their verse? For Burns's sake, not ten days since, I beat off my dog from the nest of a field-mouse, and forbade the mowers to cut the grass over her. She has had a poet for her friend, and her thatched roof is sacred. I should not like to hang about the neck of my soul all the evil that, by the last day, shall have had its seed in Byron's poem of the Corsair. It is truer of poetry than of most other matters, that

> "More water glideth by the mill
> Than wots the miller of."

But I am slipping into a sermon.

Speaking of music, some one said here, the other day, that the mingled hum of the sounds of Nature, and the distant murmur of a city, produce, invariably, the note F in music. The voices of all tune, the blacksmith's anvil and the wandering organ, the church bells and the dustman's, the choir and the cart-wheel, the widow's cry and the bride's laugh, the prisoner's clanking chain and the school-boy's noise at play—at the height of the church steeple *are one!* It is all "F" two hundred feet in air! The swallow can outsoar both our joys and miseries, and the lark—what are they in his chamber of the sun? If you have any unhappiness at the moment of receiving this letter, dear Doctor,

try this bit of philosophy. It's all F where the bird flies! You have no wings to get there, you say, but your mind has more than the six of the cherubim, and in your mind lies the grief you would be rid of. As Cæsar says,

> "By all the gods the Romans bow before,
> I here discard *my* sickness."

I'll be above F, and let troubles hang below. What a twopenny matter it makes of all our cares and vexations! I'll find a boy to climb to the top of a tall pine I have, and tie me up a white flag, which shall be above high-sorrow mark henceforth. I will neither be elated or grieved without looking at it. It floats at "F," where it is *all one!* Why, it will be a castle in the air, indeed—impregnable to unrest. Why not, dear Doctor? Why should we not set up a reminder, that our sorrows are only so deep—that the lees are but at the bottom, and there is good wine at the top—that there is an atmosphere but a little above us where our sorrows melt into our joys? No man need be unhappy who can see the grasshopper of a church-vane.

It is surprising how mere a matter of animal spirits is the generation of many of our bluest devils; and it is more surprising that we have neither the memory to recall the trifles that have put them to the flight, nor the resolution to combat their approach. A man will be ready to hang himself in the morning for an annoyance that he has the best reason to know would scarce give him a thought at night. Even a dinner is a doughty devil-queller How true is the apology of Menenius, when Coriolanus had repelled his friend!

"He had not dined.
The veins unfilled, our blood is cold, and then
We pout upon the morning: are unapt
To give or to forgive; but when we have stuffed
These pipes, and these conveyances of our blood,
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls
Than in our priest-like fasts. Therefore I'll watch him
Till he be dieted to my request."

I have recovered my spirits, ere now, by a friend asking me what was he matter. One seems to want but the suggestion, the presence of mind, the expressed wish, to be happy any day. My white flag shall serve me that good end. "Tut, man!" it shall say, "your grief is not grief where I am! Send your imagination this high to be whitewashed?"

Our weather, to-day, is a leaf out of October's book, soft, yet invigorating. The harvest moon seems to have forgotten her mantle last night, for there lies on the landscape a haze, that, to be so delicate, should be born of moonlight. The boys report plenty of deer tracks in the woods close by us, and the neighbors tell me they browse in troops on my buckwheat by the light of the moon Let them! I have neither trap nor gun on my premises, and Shakspeare shall be *their* sentinel too. At least, no Robin or Diggory shall shoot them without complaint or damage; though if you were here, dear Doctor, I should, most likely, borrow a gun, and lie down with you in the buckwheat, to see you bring down the fattest. And so do our partialities modify our benevolence. I fear I should compound for a visit by the slaughter of the whole herd. Perhaps you will come to shoot deer, and with that pleasant hope I will close my letter.

LETTER XII.

I HAVE nearly had my breath taken away this morning, dear Doctor, by a grave assurance, from a railroad commissioner, that five years hence I should "devour the way" between this and New York in seven hours. Close on the heels of this gentleman came an engineer of the canal, who promised me, as trippingly, that, in three years, I should run in a packet-boat from my cottage to tide-water. This was intended, in both cases, I presume, to be very pleasant intelligence. With a little time, I dare say, I shall come to think it so. But I assure you, at present, that, of all dwellers upon the canal route, myself, and the toads disentombed by the blasting of the rocks, are, perhaps, the most unpleasantly surprised—they, poor hermits, fancying themselves safe from the troubles of existence till doomsday, and I as sure that my cottage was at a safe remove from the turmoil of city propinquity.

If I am compelled to choose a hearthstone again, (God knows whether Broadway will not reach bodily to this,) I will employ an engineer to find me a spot, if indeed there be one, which has nothing behind it or about it, or in its range, which could, by any chance, make it a thoroughfare. There is a charm to me in an *in*-navigable river, which brought me to the Susquehannah. I

like the city sometimes, and I bless Heaven for steamboats; but I love haunts where I neither see a steamboat nor expect the city. What is the Hudson but a great highroad? You may have your cottage, it is true, and live by the water-side in the shade, and be a hundred miles, more or less, from the city. But every half-hour comes twanging through your trees the clang of an untuneable bell, informing you, whether you will or no, that seven hundred cits are seething past your solitude. You must be an abstracted student indeed, if you do not look after the noisy intruder till she is lost to the eye. Then follow conjectures what news may be on board, what friends may be passing unknown, what celebrities, or oddities, or wonders of beauty, may be mingling in the throng upon her decks; and, by the time you remember again that you are in the country, there sounds another bell, and another discordant whiz, and so your mind is plucked away to city thoughts and associations, while your body sits alone and discontented amid the trees.

Now, for one, I like not this divorce. If I am to be happy, my imagination must keep my body company, and both must be in the country, or both in town. With all honor to Milton, who avers—

> "The mind is its own place, and *in itself*
> Can make a hell of heaven, a heaven of hell,"

my mind to make a heaven, requires the society of its material half. Though my pores take in a palpable pleasure from the soft air of morning, my imagination feeds twice as bountifully, foraging amid the sunshine and verdure with my two proper eyes; and, in turn, my fancy feeds more steadily when I breathe

and feel what she is abroad in. Ask the traveller which were his unhappiest hours under foreign skies. If he is of my mind, he will say, they were those in which his thoughts (by letters or chance news) were driven irresistibly home, leaving his eyes blind and his ears deaf, in the desert or the strange city. There are persons, I know, who make a pleasure of revery, and, walking on the pavement, will be dreaming of fields, and in the fields think only of the distractions of town. But, with me, absent thoughts, unless to be rid of disagreeable circumstances, are a disease. When in health, I am all together, what there is of me—soul and body, head and heart—and a steamboat that should daily cut the line of my horizon, with human interest enough on board to take my thoughts with her when she disappeared, would, to my thinking, be a daily calamity. I thank God that the deep shades of the Omega lie between my cottage and the track of both canal and railroad. I live in the lap of a semicircle of hills, and the diameter, I am pleased to know, is shorter than the curve. There is a green and wholesome half mile, thickly wooded, and mine own to keep so, between my threshold and the surveyor's line, and, like the laird's Jock, I shall be "aye sticking in a tree."

Do not think, dear Doctor, that I am insensible to the grandeur of the great project to connect Lake Erie with the Hudson by railroad, or that I do not feel a becoming interest in my country's prosperity. I would fain have a farm where my cattle and I can ruminate without fear of falling asleep on a rail-track, or slipping into a canal; but there is an imaginative and a bright side to these improvements, which I look on as often as on the other. What should prevent *steam-posting*, for example—not in confined

and cramped carriages, suited to the strength of a pair of horses, but in airy and commodious apartments, furnished like a bachelor's lodgings, with bed, kitchen, and servants? What should prevent the transfer of such a structure from railroad to canal-boat, as occasion required? In five years, probably, there will pass through this village a railroad and a canal, by which, together, we shall have an unbroken chain of canal and railroad communication with most of the principal sea-board cities of this country, and with half the towns and objects of curiosity in the west and north.

I build a tenement on wheels, considerably longer than the accommodations of single gentlemen at hotels, with a small kitchen, and such a cook as pleases the genius of republics. The vehicle shall be furnished, we will say, with tangent movable rails, or some other convenience for wheeling off the track whenever there is occasion to stop or loiter. As I said before, it should be arranged also for transfer to a boat. In either case there shall be post-horses, as upon the English roads, ready to be put to, at a moment's warning, and capable, upon the railroad at least, of a sufficient rate of speed. What could be more delightful or more easy than to furnish this ambulatory cottage with light furniture from your stationary home, cram it with books, and such little refinements as you most miss abroad, and, purchasing provisions by the way, travel *under your own roof* from one end of the country to the other? Imagine me sending you word, some fine morning, from Jersey City, to come over and breakfast with me at *my cottage*, just arrived by railroad from the country? Or, going to the Springs with a house ready furnished? Or, inviting you to accept of my hospitality during a trip to Baltimore,

or Cincinnati, or Montreal? The English have anticipated this luxury in their expensive private yachts, with which they traverse the Levant, and drink wine from their own cellars at Joppa and Trebizond; but what is that to travelling the same distance on land, without storms or sea-sickness, with the choice of companions every hour, and at a hundredth part of the cost? The snail has been before us in the invention.

I presume, dear Doctor, that even you would be obliged to fish around considerably to find Owego on the map; yet the people, here, expect in a year or two to sit at their windows, and see all the fashion and curiosity, as well as the dignity and business of the world go by. The little village, to which prosperity

> "Is as the osprey to the fish, who takes it
> By sovereignty of nature,"

lies at the joint of a great cross of northern and western travel. The Erie railroad will intersect here the canal which follows the Susquehannah to the Chenango, and you may as well come to Glenmary if you wish to see your friend, the General, on his annual trip to the Springs. Think what a superb route it will be for southern travellers! Instead of being filtered through all the sea-board cities, at great cost of money and temper, they will strike the Susquehannah at Columbia, and follow its delicious windings past Wyoming to Owego, where, turning west, they may steam up the small lakes to Niagara, or, keeping on the Chenango, track that exquisite river by canal to the Mohawk, and so on to the Springs—all the way by the most lovely river-courses in the world. Pure air, new scenery, and a near and complete escape from the cities in the hot months, will be (the O-egoists

think) inducements enough to bring the southern cities, rank and file, in annual review before us. The canal-boat, of course, will be "the genteel thing" among the arrivals in this metropolis. Pleasure north and south, business east and west. We shall take our fashions from New Orleans, and I do not despair of seeing a café on the Susquehannah, with a French *dame de comptoir*, marble tables, and the Picayune newspaper. If my project of travelling cottages should succeed, I shall offer the skirt of my Omega to such of my New Orleans friends as would like to pasture a cow during the summer, and when they and the orioles migrate in the autumn, why, we will up cottage and be off to the south too—freeze who likes in Tioga.

I wish my young trees liked this air of Italy as well as I. This ten days' sunshine has pinched their thirsty tops, and it looks like mid-autumn from my seat under the bridge. No water, save a tricklet in the early morning. But *such* weather for picknicking! The buckwheat is sun-dried, and will yield but half a crop. The deer come down to the spring-heads, and the snakes creep to the river. Jenny toils at the deep-down well-bucket, and the minister prays for rain. I love the sun, and pray for no advent but yours.

You have never seen, I dare be certain, a volume of poems called "Mundi et Cordis Carmina," by Thomas Wade. It is one of those volumes killed, like my trees, in the general drought of poesy, but there is stuff in it worth the fair type on which it is printed, though Mr. Wade takes small pains to shape his verse to the common comprehension. I mention him now, because, in looking over his volume, I find he has been before me in particularizing the place where a letter is written, and goes beyond me, by

specifying also the place where it should be *read.* "The Pencilled Letter" and its "Answer," are among his most intelligible poems, and I will give you their concluding lines, as containing a new idea in amatory correspondence:

"Dearest, love me still;
I know new objects must thy spirit fill;
But yet I pray thee, do not love me less;
This write I where I dress. Bless thee! for ever bless!"

The reply has a very pretty conclusion, aside from the final oddity:

"Others may inherit
My heart's wild perfume; but the flower is thine.
This read where thou didst write. All blessings round thee throng."

It is in your quality as bachelor that you get the loan of this idea, for in love, "a trick not worth an egg," so it be new, is worth the knowing.

Here's a precious coil! The red heifer has chewed up a lace cape, and the breachy ox has run over the "bleach and lavender" of a seven days' wear and washing. It must be laid to the drought, unless a taste for dry lace as well as wet can be proved on the peccant heifer. The ox would to the drink—small blame to *him.* But lace is expensive fodder, and the heifer must be "hobbled"—so swears the washerwoman.

"Her injury
's the jailer to her pity."

I have only the "turn overs" left, dear Doctor, and I will cover them with one of Mr. Wade's sonnets, which will serve you,

should you have occasion, for an epithalamium. It is called "the Bride," and should be read fasting by a bachelor:

"Let the trim tapers burn exceeding brightly!
And the white bed be decked as for a goddess,
Who must be pillowed, like high vesper, nightly
On couch ethereal! Be the curtains fleecy,
Like vesper's fairest, when calm nights are breezy—
Transparent, parting—showing what they hide,
Or strive to veil—by mystery deified!
The floor, gold carpet, that her zone and boddice
May lie in honor where they gently fall,
Slow loosened from her form symmetrical—
Like mist from sunlight. Burn, sweet odors, burn.
For incense at the altar of her pleasure!
Let music breathe with a voluptuous measure,
And witchcrafts trance her wheresoe'er she turn."

LETTER XIII.

This is not a very prompt answer to your last, my dear Doctor, for I intended to have taken my brains to you bodily, and replied to all your "whether-or-noes" over a broiled oyster at * * * * *. Perhaps I may bring this in my pocket. A brace of ramblers, brothers of my own, detained me for a while, but are flitting to-day; and Bartlett has been here a week, to whom, more particularly, I wish to do the honors of the scenery. We have climbed every hill-top that has the happiness of looking down on the Owaga and Susquehannah, and he agrees with me that a more lovely and habitable valley has never sat to him for its picture. Fortunately, on the day of his arrival, the dust of a six weeks' drought was washed from its face, and, barring the *wilt* that precedes autumn, the hillsides were in holyday green and looked their fairest. He has enriched his portfolio with four or five delicious sketches, and if there were gratitude or sense of renown in trees and hills, they would have nodded their tops to the two of us. It is not every valley or pine tree that finds painter and historian, but these are as insensible as beauty and greatness were ever to the claims of their trumpeters.

How long since was it that I wrote to you of Bartlett's visit to

Constantinople? Not more than four or five weeks, it seems to me, and yet, here he is, on his return from a professional trip to *Canada*, with all its best scenery snug in his portmanteau! He teamed to Turkey and back, and steamed again to America, and will be once more in England in some twenty days—having visited and sketched the two extremities of the civilized world. Why, I might farm it on the Susquehannah and keep my town-house in Constantinople—(with money.) It seemed odd to me to turn over a drawing-book, and find on one leaf a freshly-pencilled sketch of a mosque, and on the next a view of Glenmary—my turnip-field in the foreground. And then the man himself—pulling a Turkish para and a Yankee shinplaster from his pocket with the same pinch—shuffling to breakfast, in my *abri* on the Susquehannah, in a pair of peaked slippers of Constantinople, that smell as freshly of the bazar as if they were bought yesterday—waking up with '*pekke! pekke!* my good fellow!" when William brings him his boots—and never seeing a blood-red maple (just turned with the frost) without fancying it the sanguine flag of the Bosphorus or the bright jacket of a Greek! All this unsettles me strangely. The phantasmagoria of my days of vagabondage flit before my eyes again. This, "by-the-by, do you remember, in Smyrna?" and "the view you recollect from the Seraglio!" and such like slip-slop of travellers, heard within reach of my corn and pumpkins, affects me like the mad poet's proposition:

> "To twitch the rainbow from the sky,
> And splice both ends together."

I have amused my artist friend since he has been here, with

an entertainment not quite as expensive as the Holly Lodge fireworks, but quite as beautiful—the burning of log-heaps. Instead of gossiping over the tea-table, these long and chilly evenings, the three or four young men who have been staying with us were very content to tramp into the woods with a bundle of straw and a match-box, and they have been initiated into the mysteries of "picking and piling," to the considerable improvement of the glebe of Glenmary. Shelley says,

"Men scarcely know how beautiful fire is;"

and I am inclined to think that there are varieties of glory in its phenomena which would make it worthy even your metropolitan while to come to the West and "burn fallow." At this season of the year—after the autumn droughts, that is to say—the whole country here is covered with a thin smoke, stealing up from the fires on every hill, in the depths of the woods, and on the banks of the river; and, what with the graceful smoke-wreaths by day, and the blazing beacons all around the horizon by night, it adds much to the variety, and, I think, more to the beauty of our western October. It edifies the traveller who has bought wood by the pound in Paris, or stiffened for the want of it in the disforested Orient, to stand off, a rifle-shot, from a crackling wood, and toast himself by a thousand cords, burnt for the riddance. What experience I have had of these holocausts on my own land has not diminished the sense of waste and wealth with which I first watched them. Paddy's dream of "rolling in a bin of gold guineas," could scarce have seemed more luxurious.

Bartlett and I, and the rest of us, in our small way, burnt enough, I dare say, to have made a comfortable drawing-room of

Hyde Park in January, and the effects of the white light upon the trees above and around were glorious. But our fires were piles of logs and brush—small beer, of course, to the conflagration of a forest. I have seen one that was like the Thousand Columns of Constantinople ignited to a red heat, and covered with carbuncles and tongues of flame. It was a temple of fire—the floor, living coals—the roof, a heavy drapery of crimson—the aisles held up by blazing and innumerable pillars, sometimes swept by the wind till they stood in still and naked redness, while the eye could see far into their depths, and again covered and wreathed and laved in everchanging billows of flame. We want an American Tempesta or "Savage Rosa," to "wreak" such pictures on canvass; and perhaps the first step to it would be the painting of the foliage of an American autumn. These glorious wonders are peculiarities of our country; why should they not breed a peculiar school of effect and color?

Among the London news which has seasoned our breakfasts of late, I hear, pretty authentically, that Campbell is coming to look up his muse on the Susquehannah. He is at present writing the life of Petrarch, and superintending the new edition of his works, (to be illustrated in the style of Rogers's,) and, between whiles, projecting a new poem; and, my letters say, is likely to find the way, little known to poets, from the Temple of Fame to the Temple of Mammon. One would think it were scarce decent for Campbell to die without seeing Wyoming. I trust he will not. What would I not give to get upon a raft with him, and float down the Susquehannah a hundred miles, to the scene of his Gertrude, watching his fine face while the *real* displaced the *ideal* valley of his imagination. I think it would trouble him.

Probably in the warmth of composition and the familiarity of years, the imaginary scene has become enamelled and sunk into his mind, and it would remain the home of his poem, after Wyeming itself had made a distinct impression on his memory. They would be two places—not one. He wrote it with some valley of his own land in his mind's eye, and grey Scotland and sunny and verdant Pennsylvania will scarce blend. But he will be welcome. Oh, how welcome! America would rise up to Campbell. He has been the bard of freedom, generous and chivalric in all his strains; and, nation of merchants as we are, I am mistaken if the string he has most played is not the master-chord of our national character. The enthusiasm of no people on earth is so easily awoke, and Campbell is the poet of enthusiam. The school-boys have him by heart, and what lives upon their lips will live and be loved forever.

It would be a fine thing, I have often thought, dear Doctor, if every English author would be at the pains to reap his laurels in this country. If they could overcome their indignation at our disgraceful robbery of their copyrights, and come among the people who read them for the love they bear them—read them as they are not read in England, without prejudice or favor, personal or political—it would be more like taking a peep at posterity than they think. In what is the judgment of posterity better than that of contemporaries? Simply in that the author is seen from a distance—his personal qualities lost to the eye, and his literary stature seen in proper relief and proportion. We know nothing of the degrading rivalries and difficulties of his first efforts, or, if we do, we do not realize them, never having known him till success sent his name over the water. His reputation is

a Minerva to us—sprung full-grown to our knowledge. We praise him, if we like him, with the spirit in which we criticise an author of an another age—with no possible private bias. Witness the critiques upon Bulwer in this country, compared with those of his countrymen. What review has ever given him a tithe of his deservings in England? Their cold acknowledgment of his merits reminds one of Enobarbus's civility to Menas:

> "Sir! I have praised you
> When you have well deserved ten times as much
> As I have said you did!"

I need not, to you, dear Doctor, enlarge upon the benefits, political and social, to both countries, which would follow the mutual good-will of our authors. We shall never have theirs while we plunder them so barefacedly as now, and I trust in Heaven we shall, some time or other, see men in Congress who will go deeper for their opinions than the circular of a pirating bookseller.

I wish you to send me a copy of Dawes's poems when they appear. I have long thought *he* was one of the unappreciated; but I see that his fine play of Athanasia is making a stir among the paragraphers. Rufus Dawes is a poet, if God ever created one, and he *lives* his vocation as well as *imagines* it. I hope he will shuffle off the heavenward end of his mortal coil under the cool shades of my Omega. He is our Coleridge, and his talk should have reverent listeners. I have seldom been more pleased at a change in the literary kaleidoscope, than at his awakening popularity, and I pray you, blow what breath you have into his

new-spread sail. Cranch, the artist, who lived with me in Italy, (a beautiful *scholar* in the art, whose hand is fast overtaking his head,) has, I see by the papers, made a capital sketch of him. Do you know whether it is to be engraved for the book?

Ossian represents the ghosts of his heroes lamenting that they had not had their fame, and it is a pity, I think, that we had not some literary apostle to tell us, from the temple of our Athens, who are the unknown great. Certain it is, they often live among us, and achieve their greatness unrecognized. How profoundly dull was England to the merits of Charles Lamb till he died! Yet he was a fine illustration of my remark just now. America was posterity to him. The writings of all our young authors were tinctured with imitation of his style, when, in England, (as I personally know,) it was difficult to light upon a person who had read his Elia. Truly "the root of a great name is in the dead body." There is Walter Savage Landor, whose Imaginary Conversations contain more of the virgin ore of thought than any six modern English writers together, and how many persons in any literary circle know whether he is alive or dead—an author of Queen Elizabeth's time or Queen Victoria's? He is a man of fortune, and has bought Boccacio's garden at Fiesolé, and there, upon the classic Africus, he is tranquilly achieving his renown, and it will be unburied, and acknowledged when he is dead. Travellers will make pilgrimages to the spot where Boccacio and Landor have lived, and wonder that they did not mark while it was done—this piling of Ossa on Pelion.

By the way, Mr. Landor has tied me to the tail of his immortality, for an offence most innocently committed; and I trust his

biographer will either let me slip off at "Lethe's wharf," by expurgating the book of me, or do me justice in a note. When I was in Florence, I was indebted to him for much kind attention and hospitality; and I considered it one of the highest of my good fortunes abroad, to go to Fiesolé, and dine in the scene of the Decameron with an author who would, I thought, live as long as Boccacio. Mr. Landor has a choice collection of paintings, and at parting he presented me with a beautiful picture by Cuyp, which I had particularly admired, and gave me some of my most valuable letters to England, where I was then going. I mention it to show the terms on which we separated. While with him on my last visit, I had expressed a wish that the philosophical conversations in his books were separated from the political, and republished in a cheap form in America; and the following morning, before daylight, his servant knocked at the door of my lodgings, with a package of eight or ten octavo volumes, and as much manuscript, accompanied by a note from Mr. Landor, committing the whole to my discretion. These volumes, I should tell you, were interleaved and interlined very elaborately, and having kept him company under his olive-trees, were in rather a dilapidated condition. How to add such a bulk of precious stuff to my baggage, I did not know. I was at the moment of starting, and it was very clear that even if the custom-house officers took no exception to them, (they are outlawed through Italy for their political doctrines,) they would never survive a rough journey over the Apennines and Alps. I did the best I could. I sent them with a note to Theodore Fay, who was then in Florence, requesting him to forward them to America

by ship from Leghorn; a commission which I knew that kindest and most honorable of men and poets would execute with the fidelity of an angel. So he did. He handed them to an American straw-bonnet maker, (who, he had no reason to suppose, was the malicious donkey he afterward proved,) and through him they were shipped and received in New York. I expected, at the time I left Florence, to make but a short stay in England, and sail in the same summer for America; instead of which I remained in England two years, at the close of which appeared a new book of Mr. Landor's, Pericles and Aspasia. I took it up with delight, and read it through to the last chapter, where, of a sudden, the author jumps from the academy of Plato, clean over three thousand years, upon the shoulders of a false American, who had robbed him of invaluable manuscripts! So there I go to posterity, astride the Finis of Pericles and Aspasia! I had corresponded occasionally with Mr. Landor, and in one of my letters had stated the fact, that the manuscripts had been committed to Mr. Miles to forward to America. He called, in consequence, at the shop of this person, who denied any knowledge of the books, leaving Mr. Landor to suppose that I had been either most careless or most culpable in my management of his trust. The books had, however, after a brief stay in New York, followed me to London; and, Fay and Mr. Landor happening there together, the explanation was made, and the books and manuscripts restored, unharmed, to the author. I was not long enough in London, afterward, to know whether I was forgiven by Mr. Landor; but, as his book has not reached a second edition, I am still writhing in my purgatory of print.

I have told you this long story, dear Doctor, because I am sometimes questioned on the subject by the literary people with whom you live, and hereafter I shall transfer them to your button for the whole matter. But what a letter! Write me two for it, and revenge yourself in the postage.

LETTER XIV.

This is *return month,* dear Doctor, and, if it were only to be in fashion, you should have a *quid pro quo* for your four pages. October restores and returns; your gay friends and invalids return to the city; the birds and the planters return to the south; the seed returns to the granary; the brook at my feet is noisy again with its returned waters; the leaves are returning to the earth; and the heart, that has been out-of-doors while the summer lasted, comes home from its wanderings by field and stream, and returns to feed on its harvest of new thoughts, past pleasures, and strengthened and confirmed affections. At this time of the year, too, you expect a return (not of pasteboard) for your "visits;" but, as you have made me no visit, either friendly or professional, I owe you nothing. And that is the first consolation I have found for your shortcomings (or no-comings-at-all) to Glenmary.

Now, consider my arms a-kimbo, if you please, while I ask you what you mean by calling Glenmary "backwoods!" Faith, I wish it were more backwoods than it is! Here be cards to be left, sir, morning calls to be made, body-coat soirées, and ceremony enough to keep one's most holyday manners well aired.

The two miles' distance between me and Owego serves me for no exemption, for the village of Canewana, which is a mile nearer on the road, is equally within the latitude of silver forks; and dinners are given in both, which want no one of the belongings of Belgrave Square, save port-wine and powdered footmen. I think it is in one of Miss Austin's novels that a lady claims it to be a smart neighborhood in which she "dines with four-and-twenty families." If there are not more than half as many in Owego who give dinners, there are twice as many who ask to tea and give ice-cream and champaign. Then for the fashions, there is as liberal a sprinkling of French bonnets in the Owego church as in any village congregation in England. And for the shops—that subject is worthy of a sentence by itself. When I say there is no need to go to New York for hat, boots, or coat, I mean that the Owego tradesmen (if you are capable of describing what you want) are capable of supplying you with the best and most modish of these articles. Call you that "backwoods?"

All this, I am free to confess, clashes with the *beau ideal* of the

"*Beatus ille qui procul,*" etc.

I had myself imagined, and continued to imagine for some weeks after coming here,) that, so near the primeval wilderness, I might lay up my best coat and my ceremony in lavender, and live in fustian and a plain way. I looked forward to the delights of a broad straw hat, large shoes, baggy habiliments, and leave to sigh or whistle without offence; and it seemed to me that it was the conclusion of a species of apprenticeship, and the beginning of my "freedom." To be above no clean and honest employment of one's time; to drive a pair of horses or a yoke of oxen with

equal alacrity, and to be commented on for neither the one nor the other; to have none but wholesome farming cares, and work with nature and honest yeomen, and be quite clear of mortifications, envies, advice, remonstrance, coldness, misapprehensions, and etiquettes; this is what I, like most persons who "forswear the full tide of the world," looked upon as the blessed promise of retirement. But, alas! wherever there is a butcher's shop and a post-office, an apothecary and a blacksmith, an "Arcade" and a milliner—wherever the conveniences of life are, in short—there has already arrived the Procrustes of opinion. Men's eyes will look on you and bring you to judgment, and unless you would live on wild meat and corn-bread in the wilderness, with neither friend nor helper, you must give in to a compromise—yield half at least of your independence, and take it back in common-place comfort. This is very every-day wisdom to those who know it; but you are as likely as any man in the world to have sat with your feet over the fire, and fancied yourself on a wild horse in the prairie, with nothing to distinguish you from the warlike Camanche, except capital wine in the cellar of your wigwam, and the last new novel and play, which should reach this same wigwam—you have not exactly determined how! Such "pyramises are goodly things," but they are built of the smoke of your cigar.

This part of the country is not destitute of the chances of adventure, however, and twice in the year, at least, you may, if you choose, open a valve for our spirits. One half the population of the neighborhood is engaged in what is called *lumbering*, and until the pine timber of the forest can be counted like the cedars of Labanon, this vocation will serve the uses of the mobs

of England, the revolutions of France, and the plots of Italy. I may add, the music and theatres of Austria and Prussia, the sensual indulgence of the Turk, and the intrigue of the Spaniard; for there is, in every people under the sun, a *superflu* of spirits unconsumed by common occupation, which, if not turned adroitly or accidentally to some useful or harmless end, will expend its reckless energy in trouble and mischief.

The preparations for the adventures of which I speak, though laborious, are often conducted like a frolic. The felling of the trees in mid-winter, the cutting of shingles, and the drawing out on the snow, are employments preferred by the young men to the tamer but less arduous work of the farm-yard; and, in the temporary and uncomfortable *shanties*, deep in the woods, subsisting often on nothing but pork and whiskey, they find metal more attractive than village or fireside. The small streams emptying into the Susquehannah are innumerable, and, eight or ten miles back from the river, the arks are built, and the materials of the rafts collected, ready to launch with the first thaw. I live, myself, as you know, on one of these tributaries, a quarter of a mile from its junction. The Owaga trips along at the foot of my lawn, as private and untroubled, for the greater part of the year, as Virginia Water at Windsor; but, as it swells in March, the noise of voices and hammering, coming out from the woods above, warns us of the approach of an ark; and, at the rate of eight or ten miles an hour, the rude structure shoots by, floating high on the water, without its lading, (which it takes in at the village below,) and manned with a singing and saucy crew, who dodge the branches of the trees, and work their steering paddles with an adroitness and nonchalance which sufficiently shows the

character of the class. The sudden bends which the river takes in describing my woody Omega, put their steersmanship to the test; and, when the leaves are off the trees, it is a curious sight to see the bulky monsters, shining with new boards, whirling around in the swift eddies, and, when caught by the current again, gliding off among the trees, like a singing and swearing phantom of an unfinished barn.

At the village they take wheat and pork into the arks, load their rafts with plank and shingles, and wait for the return of the freshet. It is a fact you may not know, that, when a river is rising, the middle is the highest, and *vice versa* when falling—sufficiently proved by the experience of the raftsmen, who, if they start before the flow is at its top, can not keep their crafts from the shore. A penthouse, barely sufficient for a man to stretch himself below, is raised on the deck, with a fire-place of earth and loose stone, and, with what provision they can afford, and plenty of whiskey, they shove out into the stream. Thenceforward it is *vogue la galère!* They have nothing to do, all day, but abandon themselves to the current, sing and dance and take their turn at the steering oars; and, when the sun sets, they look out for an eddy, and pull in to the shore. The stopping-places are not very numerous, and are well known to all who follow the trade; and, as the river swarms with rafts, the getting to land, and making sure of a fastening, is a scene always of great competition, and often of desperate fighting. When all is settled for the night, however, and the fires are lit on the long range of the flotilla, the raftsmen get together over their whiskey and provender, and tell the thousand stories of their escapes and accidents; and, with the repetition of this, night after night, the whole

rafting population, along the five hundred miles of the Susquehannah, becomes partially acquainted, and forms a sympathetic *corps*, whose excitement and *esprit* might be roused to very dangerous uses.

By daylight they are cast off and once more on the current, and in five or seven days they arrive at tide-water, where the crew is immediately discharged, and start, usually on foot, to follow the river home again. There are several places in the navigation which are dangerous, such as rapids and dam-sluices; and, what with these, and the scenes at the eddies, and their pilgrimage through a thinly settled and wild country home again, they see enough of adventure to make them fireside heroes, and incapacitate them, (while their vigor lasts, at least,) for all the more quiet habits of the farmer. The consequence is easy to be seen. Agriculture is but partially followed throughout the country, and while these cheap facilities for transporting produce to the sea-board exists, those who are contented to stay at home, and cultivate the rich river-lands of the country, are sure of high prices and a ready reward for their labor.

Moral. Come to the Susquehannah, and settle on a farm. You did not know what I was driving at, all this while!

The raftsmen who "follow the Delaware" (to use their own poetical expression) are said to be a much wilder class than those on the Susquehannah. In returning to Owego, by different routes, I have often fallen in with parties of both; and certainly nothing could be more entertaining than to listen to their tales. In a couple of years the canal route on the Susquehannah will lay open this rich vein of the picturesque and amusing, and, as the tranquil boat glides peacefully along the river bank, the

traveller will be surprised with the strange effect of these immense flotillas, with their many fires and wild people, lying in the glassy bends of the solitary stream; the smoke stealing through the dark forest, and the confusion of a hundred excited voices breaking the silence. In my trip down the river in the spring, I saw enough that was novel in this way to fill a new portfolio for Bartlett, and I intend he shall raft it with me to salt water the next time he comes among us.

How delicious are these October noons! They will soon chill, I am afraid, and I shall be obliged to give up my out-of-doors habits; but I shall do it unwillingly. I have changed sides under the bridge, to sit with my feet in the sun, and I trust this warm corner will last me, till November at least. The odor of the dying leaves, and the song of the strengthening brook, are still sufficient allurements, and even your rheumatism (of which the Latin should be *podagra*) might safely keep me company till dinner. Adieu, dear Doctor! write me a long account of Vestris and Matthews, (how *you* like them, I mean, for I know very well how I like them myself,) and thank me for turning over to you a new leaf of American romance. You are welcome to write a novel, and call it "The Raftsman of the Susquehannah."

LETTER XV.

"When did I descend the Susquehannah on a raft?" Never, dear Doctor! But I have descended it in a steamboat, and that may surprise you more. It is an *in*-navigable river, it is true; and, it is true, too, that there are some twenty dams across it between Owego and Wilkesbarre; yet, have I steamed it from Owego to Wyoming, one hundred and fifty miles in twelve hours —*on the top of a freshet.* The dams were deep under the water, and the river was as smooth as the Hudson. And now you will wonder how a steamer came, by fair means, at Owego.

A year or two since, before there was a prospect of extending the Pennsylvania canal to this place, it became desirable to bring the coal of "the keystone state" to these southern counties by some cheaper conveyance than horse-teams. A friend of mine, living here, took it into his head that, as salmon and shad will ascend a fall of twenty feet in a river, the propulsive energy of their tails might possibly furnish a hint for a steamer that would shoot up dams and rapids. The suggestion was made to a Connecticut man, who, of course, undertook it. He would have been less than a Yankee if he had not *tried.* The product of his ingenuity was the steamboat "Susquehannah," drawing but

eighteen inches; and, besides her side-paddles, having an immense wheel in the stern, which, playing in the slack water of the boat, would drive her up Niagara, if she would but hold together. The principal weight of her machinery hung upon two wooden arches running fore and aft, and altogether she was a neat piece of contrivance, and promised fairly to answer the purpose.

I think the "Susquehannah" had made three trips when she broke a shaft, and was laid up; and, what with one delay and another, the canal was half completed between her two havens before the experiment had fairly succeeded. A month or two since, the proprietors determined to run her down the river for the purpose of selling her, and I was invited, among others, to join in the trip.

The only offices professionally filled on board, were those of the engineer and pilot. Captain, mate, firemen, steward, cook, and chambermaid, were represented *en amateur*, by gentlemen passengers. We rang the bell at the starting hour with the zeal usually displayed in that department, and, by the assistance of the current, got off in the usual style of a steamboat departure, wanting only the newsboys and pickpockets. With a stream running at five knots, and paddles calculated to mount a cascade, we could not fail to take the river in gallant style, and before we had regulated our wood-piles and pantry, we were backing water at Athens, twenty miles on our way.

Navigating the Susquehannah is very much like dancing "the cheat." You are always making straight up to a mountain, with no apparent possibility of escaping contact with it, and it is an even chance, up to the last moment, which side of it you are to *chassez* with the current. Meantime the sun seems capering

about to all points of the compass, the shadows falling in every possible direction, and, north, south, east, and west, changing places with the familiarity of a masquerade. The blindness of the river's course is increased by the innumerable small islands in its bosom, whose tall elms and close-set willows meet half-way those from either shore; and, the current very often dividing above them, it takes an old voyager to choose between the shaded alleys, by either of which, you would think, Arethusa migh have eluded her lover.

My own mental occupation, as we glided on, was the distribution of white villas along the shore, on spots where Nature seemed to have arranged the ground for their reception. I saw thousands of sites where the lawns were made, the terraces defined and levelled, the groves tastefully clumped, the ancient trees ready with their broad shadows, the approaches to the water laid out, the banks sloped, and, in everything, the labor of art seemingly all anticipated by Nature. I grew tired of exclaiming, to the friend who was beside me, "What an exquisite site for a villa! What a sweet spot for a cottage!" If I had had the power to people the Susquehannah by the wave of a wand, from those I know capable of appreciating its beauty, what a paradise I could have spread out between my own home and Wyoming! It was pleasant to know, that, by changes scarcely less than magical, these lovely banks will soon be amply seen and admired, and probably as rapidly seized upon and inhabited by persons of taste. The gangs of laborers at the foot of every steep cliff, doing the first rough work of the canal, gave promise of a speedy change in the aspect of this almost unknown river.

It was sometimes ticklish steering among the rafts and arks

with which the river was thronged, and we never passed one without getting the raftsman's rude hail. One of them furnished my vocabulary with a new measure of speed. He stood at the stern oar of a shingle raft, gaping at us, open-mouthed, as we came down upon them. "Wal!" said he, as we shot past, "you're going a *good hickory*, mister!" It was amusing, again, to run suddenly round a point and come upon a raft with a minute's warning; the voyagers as little expecting an intrusion upon their privacy, as a retired student to be unroofed in a London garret. The different modes of expressing surprise became at last quite a study to me, yet total indifference was not infrequent; and there were some, who, I think, would not have risen from their elbows if the steamer had flown bodily over them.

We passed the Falls of Wyalusing (most musical of Indian names) and Buttermilk Falls, both cascades worthy of being known and sung, and twilight overtook us some two hours from Wyoming. We had no lights on board, and the engineer was unwilling to run in the dark; so, our pilot being an old raftsman, we put into the first "eddy," and moored for the night. These eddies, by the way, would not easily be found by a stranger, but to the practiced navigators of the river they are all numbered and named like harbors on a coast. The strong current, in the direct force of which the clumsy raft would find it impossible to come to, and moor, is at these places turned back by some projection of the shore, or ledge at the bottom, and a pool of still water is formed, in which the craft may lie secure for the night. The lumbermen give a cheer when they have steered successfully in, and, springing joyfully ashore, drive their stakes, eat, dance, quarrel, and sleep; and many a good tale is told of rafts slily

unmoored, and set adrift at midnight by parties from the eddies above, and of the consequent adventures of running in the dark. We had on board two gentlemen who had earned an independence in this rough vocation, and their stories, told laughingly against each other, developed well the expedient and hazard of the vocation. One of them had once been mischievously cut adrift by the owner of a rival cargo, when moored in an eddy with an ark-load of grain. The article was scarce and high in the markets below, and he had gone to sleep securely under his penthouse, and was dreaming of his profits, when he suddenly awoke with a shock, and discovered that he was high and dry upon a sedgy island some miles below his moorings. The freshet was falling fast, and, soon after daylight, his competitor for the market drifted past with a laugh, and confidently shouted out a good-bye till another voyage. The triumphant ark-master floated on all day, moored again at night, and arrived safely at tide-water, where the first object that struck his sight was the ark he had left in the sedges, its freight sold, its owner preparing to return home, and the market of course forestalled! The "Roland for his Oliver" had, with incredible exertion, *dug a canal* for his ark, launched her on the slime, and, by risking the night-running, passed him unobserved, and gained a day—a feat as illustrative of the American genius for emergency as any on record.

It was a still, starlight night, and the river was laced with the long reflections of the raft-fires, while the softened songs of the men over their evening carouse, came to us along the smooth water with the effect of far better music. What with "wooding" at two or three places, however, and what with the excitement of the day, we were too fatigued to give more than a glance and

a passing note of admiration to the beauty of the scene, and the next question was, how to come by Sancho's "blessed invention of sleep." We had been detained at the wooding-places, and had made no calculation to lie by, a night. There were no beds on board, and not half room enough in the little cabin to distribute, to each passenger, six feet by two of floor. The shore was wild, and not a friendly lamp glimmering on the hills; but the pilot at last recollected having once been to a house, a mile or two back from the river, and, with the diminished remainder of our provender as a *pis aller* in case of finding no supper in our forage, we started in search. We stumbled and scrambled, and delivered our benisons to rock and brier, till I would fain have lodged with Trinculo "under a moon-calf's gaberdine;" but, by-and-by, our leader fell upon a track, and a light soon after glimmered before us. We approached through cleared fields, and, without the consent of the farmer's dog, to whose wishes on the subject we were compelled to do violence, the blaze of a huge fire (it was a chilly night of spring) soon bettered our resignation. A stout, white-headed fellow of twenty-eight or thirty, barefooted, sat in a cradle, see-sawing before the fire, and, without rising when we entered, or expressing the slightest surprise at our visit, he replied, to our questions, that he was the father of some twelve sorrel and barefoot copies of himself huddled into the corner, that "the woman" was his wife, and that we were welcome "to stay." Upon this, the "woman" for the first time looked at us, counted us with the nods of her head, and disappeared with the only candle.

When his wife reappeared, the burly farmer extracted himself with some difficulty from the cradle, and, without a word passing

between them, entered upon his office as chamberlain. We followed him up stairs, where we were agreeably surprised to find three very presentable beds; and, as I happened to be the last and fifth, I felicitated myself on the good chance of sleeping alone, "clapped into my prayers," as was recommended to Master Barnardine, and was asleep before the candle-snuff. I should have said that mine was a "single bed," in a sort of a closet partitioned off from the main chamber.

How long I had travelled in dream-land I have no means of knowing, but I was awoke by a touch on the shoulder, and the information that I must make room for a bedfellow. It was a soft-voiced young gentleman, as well as I could perceive, with his collar turned down, and a book under his arm. Without very clearly remembering where I was, I represented to my proposed friend that I occupied as nearly as possible the whole of the bed—to say nothing of a foot, over which he might see (the *foot*) by looking where it outreached the coverlet. It was a very short bed, indeed.

"It was large enough for me till you came," said the stranger, modestly.

"Then I am the intruder?" I asked.

"No intrusion if you will share with me," he said; "but as this is my bed, and I have no resource but the kitchen-fire, perhaps you will let me in."

There was no resisting his tone of good humor, and my friend, by this time, having prepared himself to take up as little room as possible, I consented that he should blow out the candle and get under the blanket. The argument and the effort of making myself small as he crept in, had partially waked me, and before my

ears were sealed up again, I learned that my companion, who proved rather talkative, was the village schoolmaster. He taught for twelve dollars a month and his board—taking the latter a week at a time with the different families to which his pupils belonged. For the present week he was quartered upon our host, and, having been out visiting, past the usual hour of bedtime, he was not aware of the arrival of strangers till he found me on his pillow.

I went to sleep, admiring the amiable temper of my new friend under the circumstances, but awoke presently with a sense of suffocation. The schoolmaster was fast asleep, but his arms were clasped tightly round my throat. I disengaged them without waking him, and composed myself again.

Once more I awoke half suffocated. My friend's arms had found their way again around my neck, and, though evidently fast asleep, he was drawing me to him with a clasp I found it difficult to unloose. I shook him broad awake, and begged him to take notice that he was sleeping with a perfect stranger. He seemed very much annoyed at having disturbed me, made twenty apologies, and, turning his back, soon fell asleep. I followed his example, wishing him a new turn to his dream.

A third time I sprang up choking from the pillow, drawing my companion fairly on end with me. I could stand it no longer. Even when half aroused he could hardly be persuaded to let go his hold of my neck. I jumped out of bed, and flung open the window for a little air. The moon had risen, and the night was exquisitely fine. A brawling brook ran under the window, and, after a minute or two, being thoroughly awaked, I looked at my watch in the moonlight, and found it wanted but an hour or two

of morning. Afraid to risk my throat again, and remembering that I could not fairly quarrel with my friend, who had undoubtedly a right to embrace, after his own fashion, any intruder who ventured into his proper bed, I went down stairs, and raked open the embers of the kitchen fire, which served me for less affectionate company till dawn. How and where he could have acquired his caressing habits, were subjects upon which I speculated unsatisfactorily over the coals.

My companions were called up at sunrise by the landlord, and, as we were paying for our lodging, the schoolmaster came down to see us off. I was less surprised when I came to look at him by daylight. It was a fair, delicate boy of sixteen, whose slender health had probably turned his attention to books, and who, perhaps, had never slept away from his mother till he went abroad to teach school. Quite satisfied with one experiment of filling the maternal relation, I wished him a less refractory bedfellow, and we hastened on board.

The rafts were under weigh before us, and the tortoise had overtaken the hare, for we passed several that we had passed higher up, and did not fail to get a jeer for our sluggishness. An hour or two brought us to Wilkesbarre, an excellent hotel, good breakfast, and new and kind friends; and so ended my trip on the Susquehannah. Some other time I will tell you how beautiful is the valley of Wyoming, which I have since seen in the holyday colors of October. Thereby hangs a tale, too, worth telling and hearing; and, as a promise is good parting stuff, adieu!

LETTER XVI.

The books and the music came safe to hand, dear Doctor, but I trust we are not to stand upon *quid-pro-quosities*. The barrel of buckwheat not only cost me nothing, but I have had my uses of it in the raising, and can no more look upon its *value*, than upon a flower which I pluck to smell, and give away when it is faded. I have sold some of my crops for the oddity of the sensation; and I assure you it is very much like being paid for dancing when the ball is over. Why, consider the offices this very buckwheat has performed! There was the trust in Providence, in the purchase of the seed—*a sermon*. There were the exercise and health in ploughing, harrowing, and sowing—*prescription* and *pill*. There was the performance of the grain, its sprouting, its flowering, its earing, and its ripening—a great deal more amusing than a *play*. Then there were the harvesting, thrashing, fanning, and grinding—a sort of pastoral collection, publication, and purgation by criticism. Now suppose your clergyman, your physician, your favorite theatrical corps, your publisher, printer, and critic, thrashed and sold in bags for six shillings a bushel! I assure you the cases are similar, except that the buckwheat makes probably the more savory cake.

The new magazine was welcome; the more, that it brought back to me my own days of rash adventure in such ticklish craft, with a pleasant sense of deliverance from its risk and toil. The imprint of "No. I, Vol. I," reads to me like a bond for the unreserved abandonment of time and soul. Truly, youth is wisely provided with little forethought, and much hope. What child would learn the alphabet, if he could see at a glance the toil that lies behind it? I look upon the fresh type and read the sanguine prospectus of this new-born Monthly, and remember, with astonishment, the thoughtlessness with which, years ago, I launched, in the same gay colors, such a venture on the wave. It is a voyage that requires plentiful stores, much experience of the deeps and shallows of the literary seas, and a hand at every halyard; yet, to abandon my simile, I proposed to be publisher and editor, critic and contributor; and I soon found that I might as well have added *reader* to my manifold offices. No one who has not tried this vocation can have any idea of the difficulty of procuring the light, yet condensed—the fragmented, yet finished—the good-tempered and gentlemanly, yet high-seasoned and dashing papers necessary to a periodical. A man who can write them, can, in our country, put himself to a more profitable use—and does. The best magazine-writer living, in my opinion, is Edward Everett; and he governs a State with the same time and attention which, in England, perhaps, would be cramped to contributing to a review. Calhoun might write wonderfully fine articles. Legaré, of Charleston, has the right talent, with the learning. Crittenden, of the Senate, I should think, might have written the most brilliant satirical papers. But these, and others like them, are men the country and their own ambition can not

spare. There is a younger class of writers, however; and though the greater number of these, too, fill responsible stations in society, separate from general literature, they might be induced, probably, were the remuneration adequate, to lend their support to a periodical "till the flower of their fame shall be more blown." Among them are Felton and Longfellow, both professors at Cambridge; and Sumner and Henry Cleaveland, lawyers of Boston—a knot of writers who sometimes don the cumbrous armor of the North American Review, but who would show to more advantage in the lighter harness of the monthlies. I could name twenty more, to any one interested to know them, all valuable allies to a periodical; but no literary man questions that. We have in our country talent enough, if there were the skill and means to put it judiciously together.

Coleridge and others have mourned over the age of reviews, as the downfall and desecration of authorship; but I am inclined to think authors gain more than they lose by the facility of criticism. What chance has a book on a shelf, waiting to be called for by the purchaser uninformed of its merits, to one whose beauties and defects have been canvassed by these Mercury-winged messengers, volant and universal as the quickest news of the hour? How slow and unsympathetic must have been the progress of a reputation, when the judicious admirer of a new book could but read and put it by, expressing his delight, at farthest, to his immediate friend or literary correspondent? The apprehensive and honest readers of a book are never many; but, in our days, if it reach but one of these, what is the common outlet of his enthusiasm? Why, a trumpet-tongued review, that makes an entire people partakers of his appreciation, in the wax and wane

of a single moon. Greedily as all men and women devour books, ninety-nine in a hundred require them to be first cut up—liable else, like children at their meals, to swallow the wrong morsel. Yet, like children, still, when the good is pointed out, they digest it as well as another; and so is diffused an understanding, as well as prompt admiration of the author. For myself, I am free to confess, I am one of those who like to take the first taste of an author in a good review. I look upon the reviewer as a sensible friend, who came before me to the feast, and recommends to me the dish that has most pleased him. There is a fellowship in agreeing that it is good. I have often wished there were a Washington among the critics—some one upon whose judgment, freedom from paltry motives, generosity and fairness, I could pin my faith blindly and implicitly. Dilke, of the London Athenæum, is the nearest approach to this character, and a good proof of it is an order frequently given, (a London publisher informed me,) by country gentlemen: "Send me everything the Athenæum praises." Though a man of letters, Dilke is not an author, and, by the way, dear Doctor, I think in that lies the best qualification, if not the only chance for the impartiality of the critic. How few authors are capable of praising a book by which their own is thrown into shadow. "Why does Plato never mention Zenophon? and why does Zenophon inveigh against Plato?"

But I think there is less to fear from jealousy, than from the want of sympathy between writers on different subjects, or in different styles. D'Israeli the elder, from whom I have just quoted, sounds the depth of this matter with the very plummet of truth. "Every man of genius has a manner of his own; a mode of thinking and a habit of style; and usually decides on a

work as it approximates or varies from his own. When one great author depreciates another, it has often no worse source than his own taste. The witty Cowley despised the natural Chaucer; the cold, classical Boileau, the rough sublimity of Crebillon; the refining Marivaux, the familiar Molière. The deficient sympathy in these men of genius, for modes of feeling opposite to their own, was the real cause of their opinions; and thus it happens that even superior genius is so often liable to be unjust and false in its decisions."

Apropos of English periodicals, we get them now almost wet from the press, and they seem far off and foreign no longer. But there is one (to me) melancholy note in the pæan with which the Great Western was welcomed. *In literature we are no longer a distinct nation.* The triumph of Atlantic steam navigation has driven the smaller drop into the larger, and London has become the centre. Farewell nationality! The English language now marks the limits of a new literary empire, and America is a suburb. Our themes, our resources, the disappearing savage, and the retiring wilderness, the free thought, and the action as free, the spirit of daring innovation, and the irreverent question of usage, the picturesque mixture of many nations in an equal home, the feeling of expanse, of unsubserviency, of distance from time-hallowed authority and prejudice—all the elements which were working gradually but gloriously together to make us a nation by ourselves, have, in this approximation of shores, either perished for our using, or slipped within the clutch of England. What effect the now near and jealous criticism of that country will have upon our politics, is a deeper question; but our literature is subsidized at a blow. Hitherto we have been to them a

strange country; the few books that reached them they criticised with complimentary jealousy, or with the courtesy due to a stranger; while our themes and our political structures were looked on with the advantage of distance, undemeaned by acquaintance with sources or familiarity with details. While all our material is thrown open to English authors, we gain nothing in exchange, for, with the instinct of descendants, we have continued to look back to our fathers, and our conversance with the wells of English literature was as complete as their own.

The *young* American author is the principal sufferer by the change. Imagine an actor compelled to make a *début* without rehearsal, and you get a faint shadow of what he has lost. It was some advantage, let me tell you, dear Doctor, to have run the gauntlet of criticism in America before being heard of in England. When Irving and Cooper first appeared as authors abroad, they sprung to sight like Minerva, full-grown. They had seen themselves in print, had reflected and improved upon private and public criticism, and were made aware of their faults before they were irrecoverably committed on this higher theatre. Keats died of a rebuke to his puerilities, which, had it been administered here, would have been borne up against, with the hope of higher appeal and new effort. He might have been the son of an *American* apothecary, and never be told by an *English* critic to "return to his gallipots." The Atlantic was, hitherto, a friendly Lethe, in which the sins of youth (so heavily and unjustly visited on aspirants to fame) were washed out and forgotten. The American, "licked into shape" by the efficient tongues of envy and jealousy at home, stepped ashore in England, wary and guarded against himself and others. The book by

which he had made himself known, might have been the successful effort after twenty failures, and it met with the indulgence of a first. The cloud of his failures, the remembrance of his degradations by ridicule were left behind. His practiced skill was measured by other's beginnings.

We suffer, too, in our social position, in England. We have sunk from the stranger to the suburban or provincial. In a year or two every feature and detail of our country will be as well known to English society as those of Margate and Brighton. Our similarity to themselves in most things will not add to their respect for us. We shall have the second place accorded to the indigenous society of well-known places of resort or travel, and to be an American will be, in England, like being a Maltese or an East Indian—every way inferior, in short, to a metropolitan in London.

You see, my dear Doctor, how I make my correspondence with you serve as a trap for my stray thoughts; and you will say, that in this letter I have caught some that might as well have escaped. But as the immortal Jack "turned" even "diseases to commodity," and as "*la superiorité est une infirmité sociale*," perhaps you will tolerate my dullness, or consider it a polite avoidance of your envy. Write me better or worse, however, and I will shape a welcome to it.

LETTER XVII.

Do you remember, my dear Doctor, in one of the Elizabethan dramas, (I forget which,) the description of the contention between the nightingale and the page's lute? Did you ever remark how a bird, sitting silent in a tree, will trill out, at the first note which breaks the stillness, as if it had waited for that signal to begin? Have you noticed the emulation of pigs in a pasture—how the galloping by of a horse in the road sets them off for a race to the limits of the cross-fence.

I have been sitting here with my feet upon the autumn leaves, portfolio on knee, for an hour. The shadow of the bridge cuts a line across my breast, leaving my thinking machinery in shadow, while the farmer portion of me mellows in the sun; the air is as still as if we had suddenly ceased to hear the growing of the grain, and the brook runs leaf-shod over the pebbles, like a child frightened by the silence into a whisper. You would say this was the very mark and fashion of an hour for the silent sympathy of letter-writing. Yet here have I sat with the temptation of an unblotted sheet before me, and my heart and thoughts full and ready; and, by my steady gazing in the brook, you would fancy I had taken the sun's function to myself, and

was sitting idle to shine. All at once from the open window of the cottage poured a passionate outbreak of Beethoven's music, (played by the beloved hand,) and with a kind of fear that I should overtake it, and a resistless desire (which, I dare say, you have felt in hearing music) to appropriate such angelic utterance to the expression of my own feelings, I forthwith started into a scribble, and have filled my first page as you see—without drawing nib. If turning over the leaf break not the charm, you are likely to have an answer writ to your last before the shadow on my breast creep two buttons downward.

Your letter was short, and if this were not the commencement of a new score, I should complain of it more gravely. Writing so soon after we had parted, you might claim that you had little to say; yet I thought (over that broiled oyster after the play) that your voluble discourse would "put a girdle round the earth" in less time than Ariel. I listened to you as a child looks at the river, wondering when it would all run by. Yet that might be partly disuse in listening—for I have grown rustic with a year's seclusion. I found it in other things. My feet swelled with walking on the pavement. My eyes were giddy with the multitude of people. My mouth became parched with the excitement of greetings and surprises, and the raising of my tones to the metropolitan pitch. I was nearly exhausted, by mid-day, with the "infinite deal of nothing." Homœopathy alone can explain why "Patter *versus* Clatter" did not finish me quite.

Ah! how admirably Charles Matthews played that night! The papers have well named him the Mercury of comedians. His playing will probably create a new school of play-*writing*—something like what he has aimed at (without sufficient study) in

the pieces he has written for himself. The finest thing I could imagine, in the dramatic way, would be a partnership (*á la* Beaumont and Fletcher) between the stage knowledge and comic talent of Matthews, and the penetrating, natural, and observant humor of Boz. The true "humor of the time" has scarcely been reached, on the stage, since Molière; and, it seems to me, that a union of the talents of these two men (both very young) might bring about a new era in high comedy. Matthews has the advantage of having been, from boyhood, conversant with the most polished society. He was taken to Italy when a boy, by one of the most munificent and gay noblemen of England, an intimate of his father, and, if I have been rightly informed, was his companion for several years of foreign residence and travel. I remember meeting him at a dinner-party in London three or four years since, when probably he had never thought seriously of the stage. Yet, at that time, it was remarked by the person who sat next me, that a better actor than his father was spoiled in the son. He was making no particular effort at humor on the occasion to which I refer; but the servants, including a fat butler of remarkable gravity, were forced to ask permission to leave the room—their laughter becoming uncontrollable. He would doubtless have doubled his profits in this country had he come as a single star; but, I trust his success will still be sufficient to establish him in an annual orbit—from east to west.

One goes to the city with fresh eyes after a year's absence, and I was struck with one or two things, which, in their gradual wax or wane, you do not seem to have remarked. What *Te Deum* has been chanted, for example, over the almost complete disappearance of the dandies? I saw but two while I was in

New York, and in them it was Nature's caprice. They would have been dandies equally in fig-leaves or wampum. The era of (studiously) plain clothes arrived some years ago in England, where Count D'Orsay, and an occasional wanderer from Broadway, are the only freshly-remembered apparitions of excessively dressed men; and, slow as has been its advent to us, it is sooner come than was predicted. I feared, for one, that our European reputation, of being the most expensive and showy of nations, was based upon the natural extreme of our political character, and would last as long as the republic. I am afraid, still, that the ostentation once shown in dress is but turned into another channel, and that the equipages of New York more than supply the showiness abated in the costume. But even this is a step onward. Finery on the horse is better than finery on the owner. The caparison of an equipage is a more manly study than the toilet of the fine gentleman; and possesses, besides, the advantage of being left properly to the saddler. On the whole, it struck me that the *countenance* of Broadway had lost a certain flimsy and tinsel character with which it used to impress me, and had, in a manner, grown hearty and unpretentious. I should be glad to know (and none can tell me better than yourself) whether this is the outer seeming of deeper changes in our character. Streets have expressive faces, and I have long marked and trusted them. It would be difficult to feel fantastic in the sumptuous gravity of Bond Street—as difficult to feel grave in the bright airiness of the Boulevard. In these two thoroughfares you are made to feel the distinctive qualities of England and France. What say you of the changed expression of Broadway?

Miss Martineau, of all travellers, has doubtless written the

most salutary book upon our manners, (*malgré* the womanish pique which distorted her judgment of Everett and others,) but there is one reproach which she has recorded against us, in which I have felt some patriotic glory, but which I am beginning to fear we deserve no longer. The text of her fault-finding is the Quixotic attentions of Americans to women in public conveyances, *apropos* of a gentleman's politeness who took an outside seat upon a coach to give a lady room for her feet. From what I could observe, in my late two or three days' travel, I think I could encourage Miss Martineau to return to America with but a trifling risk of being too particularly attended to, even were she *incognita* and young. We owe this *décadence* of chivalry to Miss Martineau, I think it may be safely said. In a country where every person of common education reads every book of travels in which his manners are discussed, the most casual mention of a blemish, even by a less authority than Miss Martineau, acts as an instant cautery. I venture to say that a young lady could scarcely be found in the United States, who would not give you, on demand, a complete list of our national faults and foibles, as recorded by Hall, Hamilton, Trollope, and Martineau. Why, they form the common staple of conversation and jest! Ay, and of speculation! Hamilton's book was scarcely dry from the press before orders were made out to an immense extent for egg-cups and silver forks. Mrs. Trollope quite extinguished the trade in spit-boxes, and made fortunes for the finger-glass manufacturers; and, Captain Marryat, I understand, is besieged in every city by the importers, to know upon what deficiency of table furniture he intends to be severe. It has been more than once suggested, (and his manners aided the idea,) that Hamilton was probably a

travelling agent for the plated-fork manufactories of Birmingham. And a fair *caveat* to both readers and reviewers of future books of travels, would be an inquiry touching their probable bearing on English manufactures. I would not be illiberal to Miss Martineau, but I would ask any candid person, whether the influx of thick shoes and cotton stockings, simultaneously with her arrival in this country, could have been entirely an unpremeditated coincidence?

We are indebted, I think, to the Astor House, for one of the pleasantest changes that I noticed while away—and I like it the better, that it is a departure from our general rule of imitating English habits too exclusively. You were with us there, and can bear witness to the refined class we met at the ladies' ordinary; while the excellence of the table and service, and the prevalence of well-bred company, had drawn the most exclusive from their private parlors, and given to the daily society of the drawing-room the character of the gay and agreeable watering places of Germany. The solitary confinement of English hotels always seemed to me particularly unsuited to the position and wants of the traveller. Loneliness is no evil at home, where books and regular means of employment are at hand; but, to be abandoned to four walls and a pormanteau, in a strange city, of a rainy day, is what nothing but an Englishman would dream of calling comfortable. It was no small relief to *us*, on that drizzly and chilly autumn day which you remember, to descend to a magnificent drawing-room, filled with some fifty or a hundred well-bred people, and pass away the hours as they would be passed under similar circumstances in a hospitable country-house in England. The beautiful architecture of the Astor apartments

and the sumptuous elegance of the furniture and table service, make it in a measure a peculiarity of the house; but the example is likely to be followed in other hotels and cities, and, I hope it will become a national habit, as in Germany, for strangers to meet at their meals and in the public rooms. Life seems to me too short for English exclusiveness in travel.

I determined to come home by Wyoming, after you left us, and took the boat to Philadelphia accordingly. We passed two or three days in that clean and pleasant city, and, among other things, made an excursion to Laurel Hill—certainly the most beautiful cemetery in the world after the Necropolis of Scutari. Indeed, the spot is selected with something like Turkish feeling, for it seems as if it were intended to associate the visits, to the resting-places of the departed, more with our pleasures than our duties. The cemetery occupies a lofty promonotory above the Schuylkill, possessing the inequality of surface so favorable to the object, and shaded with pines and other ornamental trees of great age and beauty. The views down upon the river, and through the sombre glades and alleys of the burial-grounds, are unsurpassed for sweetness and repose. The elegance which marks everything Philadelphian, is shown already in the few monuments erected. An imposing gateway leads you in from the high road, and a freestone group, large as life, representing Old Mortality at work on an inscription, and Scott leaning upon a tombstone to watch his toil, faces the entrance. I noticed the area of one tomb enclosed by a chain of hearts, cast beautifully in iron. The whole was laid out in gravel-walks, and there was no grave without its flowers. I confess the spirit of this sweet spot affected me deeply; and I look upon this, and Mount Auburn

at Cambridge, as delightful indications of a purer growth in our national character than politics and money-getting. It is a real-life poetry, which reflects as much glory upon the age as the birth of a Homer.

The sun has crept down to my paper, dear Doctor, and the shadow of the bridge falls cooler than is good for my rheumatism. I wish that the blessing of Ceres upon Ferdinand and Miranda,

> "Spring come to you at farthest,
> In the very end of harvest,"

might light on Glenmary. I enjoy winter when it comes, but its approach is altogether detestable. It is delightful to get home, however; for, like Prospero, in the play I have just quoted, there is a "delicate Ariel," (content,) who only waits on me in solitude. You will carry out the allegory, and tell me I have *Caliban* too, but, to the rudeness of country monsters, I take as kindly as Trinculo. And now I must to the woods, and by the aid of these same "ancient and fish-like" monsters, transplant me a tree or two before sunset. Adieu.

LETTER XVIII.

Our summer friends are flown, dear Doctor; not a leaf on the dogwood worth watching, though its fluted leaves were the last. Still the cottage looks summery when the sun shines, for the fir-trees, which were half lost among the flaunting of the deciduous foliage, look out, green and unchanged, from the naked branches of the grove, with neither reproach for our neglect, nor boast over the departed. They are like friends, who, in thinking of our need, forget all they have laid up against us; and, between them and the lofty spirits of mankind, there is another point of resemblance which I am woodsman enough to know. Hew down those gay trees, whose leaves scatter at the coming of winter, and they will sprout from the trodden root more vigorously than before. The evergreen, once struck to the heart, dies. If you are of my mind, you would rather learn such a pretty mock of yourself in Nature, than catch a fish with a gold ring in his maw.

A day or two since, very much such another bit of country wisdom dropped into my ears, which I thought might be available in poetry, albeit the proof be unpoetical. Talking with my neighbor, the miller, about sawing lumber for a stable I am building, I discovered, incidentally, that the mill will do more work

between sunset and dawn, than in the same number of hours by daylight. Without reasoning upon it, the miller knows practically that *streams run faster at night.* The increased heaviness of the air, and the withdrawal of the attraction of light, are probably the causes. But there is a neat tail for a sonnet coiled up in the fact, and you may blow it with a long breath to Tom Moore.

Many thanks for your offer of shopping for us, but you do injustice to the "cash stores" of Owego when you presume that there is anything short of "a hair off the great Cham's beard," which is not found in their inventory. By the way, there is one article of which I feel the daily want, and, as you live among authors who procure them ready made for ballads and romances, perhaps you can send me one before the canal freezes. I mean a venerable hermit, who, having passed through all the vicissitudes of human life, shall have nothing earthly to occupy him but to live in the woods and dispense wisdom, gratis, to all comers. I don't know whether, in your giddy town vocations, it has ever occurred to you to turn short upon yourself, in the midst of some grave but insignificant routine, and inquire (of the gentleman within) whether this is the fulfillment of your destiny; whether these little nothings are the links, near your eye, of the great chain, which you fancy, in your elevated hours, connects you with something kindred to the stars. It is oftenest in fine weather that I thus step out of myself, and, retiring a little space, borrow the eyes of my better angel, and take a look at the individual I have vacated. You shall see him yourself, dear Doctor, with three strokes of the pen; and, in giving your judgment of the dignity of his pursuits, perform the office to which I destine the hermit above bespoken.

It is not the stout fellow, with the black London hat, somewhat rusty, who stands raking away cobs from the barn-floor, though the hat has seen worshipful society, (having fallen on those blessed days when hats are as inseparable from the wearer as silk stocking or culotte,) and sports that breadth of brim by which you know me as far off as your indigenous omnibus. That's Jem, the groom, to whom, with all its reminiscences, the hat is but a tile. Nor is it the half sailor-looking, world-worn, never-smiling man, who is plying a flail upon that floor of corn, with a look as if he had learned the stroke with a cutlass, though, in his ripped and shredded upper garment, you might recognize the frogged and velvet *redingote*, native of the Rue de la Paix, which has fluttered on the Symplegades, and flapped the dust of the Acropolis. That is my tenant in the wood, who, having passed his youth and middle age with little content in a more responsible sphere of life, has limited his wishes to solitude and a supply of the wants of nature; and, though quite capable of telling story for story with my old fellow traveller, probably thinks of it only to wish its ravelled frogs were horn buttons, and its bursted seams less penetrable by the rain.

And a third person is one of my neighbors, who can see nothing done without showing you a "'cuter way," and who, sitting on the sill of the barn, is amusing himself, quite of his own accord, with beheading, cleaning, and picking an unfortunate duck, whose leg was accidentally broken by the flail. His voluntary occupation is stimulated by neither interest nor good nature, but is simply the itching to be doing something, which, in one shape or another, belongs to every genuine Jonathan. Near him, in cowhide boots, frock of fustian, and broad-brimmed sombrero of

coarse straw, stands, breathing from a bout with the flail, the individual from whom I have stepped apart, and upon whose morning's worth of existence you shall put a philosopher's estimate.

I presume *my* three hours' labor might be done for about three shillings—my mind, meantime, being entirely occupied with what I was about, calculating the number of bushels to the acre, the price of corn farther down the river, and, between whiles, discussing the merits of a patent corn-sheller, which we had abandoned for the more laborious but quicker process of thrashing.

"Purty 'cute tool!" says my neighbor, giving the machine a look out of the corner of his yellow eye, "but teoo slow! Corn ought to come off ravin' distracted. 'Taint no use to eat it up in labor. Where was that got out?"

"'Twas invented in Albany, I rather think."

"Wal, I guess t'want. It's a Varmount notion. Rot them Green Mounting-eers! they're a spiling the country. People won't work when them things lay round. Have you heern of a machine for buttoning your gallowses behind?"

"No, I have not."

"Wal, I've been expecting on't. There aint no other hard work they haint economized. Is them your hogs in the garding?"

Three vast porkers had nosed open the gate, during the discussion, and were making the best of their opportunities. After a vigorous chase, the latch was closed upon them securely, and my neighbor resumed his duck.

"Is there no way of forcing people to keep those brutes at home?" I asked of my silent tenant.

"Yes, sir. The law provides that you may shut them up, and send word to the owners to come and take them away."

"Wal! It's a chore, if you ever tried it, to catch a hog if he's middlin' spry, and when he's cotch, you've got to feed him, by law, till he's sent for; and it don't pay, mister."

"But you can charge for the feed," says the other.

"Pesky little, I tell ye. Pig fodder 's cheap, and they don't pay you for carrying on't to 'em, nor for catching the critters. It's a losin' consarn."

"Suppose I shoot them."

"Sartin you can. The owner 'll put his vally on it, and you can have as much pork at that price as 'll fill your barn. The hull neighb'rhood 'll drive their hogs into your garding."

I saw that my neighbor had looked at the matter all round; but I was sure, from his manner, that he could, if encouraged, suggest a remedy for the nuisance.

"I would give a bushel of that handsome corn," said I, "to know how to be rid of them."

"Be so perlite as to measure it out, mister, while I head in that hog. I'll show you how the deacon kept 'em out of the new buryin' ground while the fence was buildin'."

He laid down the duck, which was, by this time, fairly picked, and stood a moment looking at the three hogs, now leisurely turning up the grass at the roadside. For a reason which I did not at the moment conceive, he presently made a dash at the thinnest of the three, a hungry-looking brute, built with an approach to the greyhound, and missed catching him by an arm's length. Unluckily for the hog, however, the road was lined with crooked rail fence, which deceived him with constant promise of escape by

a short turn; and, by a skillful heading off, and a most industrious chase of some fifteen minutes, he was cornered at last, and secured by the hind leg.

"A hog," said he, dragging him along with the greatest gravity, "hates a straight line like pizen. If they'd run right in eend, you'd never catch 'em in natur. Like some folks, aint it? Boy, fetch me a skrimmage of them whole corn."

He drove the hog before him, wheelbarrow fashion, into an open cow-pen, and put up the bars. The boy (his son, who had been waiting for him outside the barn) brought him a few ears of ripe corn, and, as soon as the hog had recovered his breath a little, he threw them into the pen, and drew out a knife from his pocket, which he whetted on the rail before him.

"Now," said he, as the voracious animal, unaccustomed to such appetizing food, seized ravenously on the corn, "it's according to law to take up a stray hog and feed him, aint it?"

"Certainly."

By this time the greedy creature began to show symptoms of choking, and my friend's design became clearer.

"And it's Christian charity," he continued, letting down the bars, and stepping in as the hog rolled upon his side, "not to let your neighbor lose his critters by choking, if you can kill 'em in time to save their meat, ain't it?"

"Certainly."

"Wal!" said he, cutting the animal's throat, "you can send word to the owner of that pork to come and take it away, and, if he don't like to salt down at a minute's notice, he'll keep the rest at hum, and pay you for your corn. And that's the way the

deacon sarved my hogs, darn his long face, and I eat pork till I was sick of the sight on't."

A bushel of corn being worth about six shillings, I had paid twice the worth of my own morning's work for this very Yankee expedient. My neighbor borrowed a bag, shouldered his grist, and trudged off to the mill; and, relinquishing my flail to Jem, I leaned over the fence in the warm autumn sunshine, and, with my eyes on the swift, yet still bosom of the river below, fell to wondering, as I said before, whether the hour, of which I have given you a picture, was a fitting link in a wise man's destiny. The day was one to give birth to great resolves, bright, elastic, and genial; and the leafless trees, so lorn and comfortless in cloudier times, seemed lifting into the sky with heroic endurance, while the swollen Owaga, flowing on with twice the summer's depth, semed gathering soul to defy the fetters of winter. There was something inharmonious with little pursuits, in everything I could see. Such air and sunshine, I thought, should overtake one in some labor of philanthropy, in some sacrifice for friend or country, in the glow of some noble composition, or, if in the exercise of physical energy, at least to some large profit. Yet a few shillings expressed the whole result of my morning's employment, and the society by which my thoughts had been colored were such as I have described. Still this is "farming," and so lived Cincinnatus.

Now, dear Doctor, you can be grand among your gallipots, and if your eye turns in upon yourself, you may reflect complacently on the almost sublime ends of the art of healing; but resolve me, if you please, *my* little problem. What state of the weather should I live up to? My present avocations, well enough in a

gray day, or a rainy, or a raw, are quite put out of countenance by a blue sky and a genial sun. If it were always like to-day, I should be obliged to seek distinction, in some way. There would be no looking such a sky in the face three days consecutively, busied always with pigs and corn. You see the use of a hermit to settle such points. But adieu while I have room to write it.

LETTER XIX.

Dear Doctor: This, though a good working-day by the almanac, is, with me, one of those mental Sundays, when imagination, memory, causality, and the other 'prentices of the workshop, seem bent upon a holiday. There is no visible reason why I should not "toil and spin." My breakfast sits lightly and the sun lies warm upon my slipshod feet; Foible, my dog, waits with patience the hour to go to the woods, and every wheel in the complicated machinery of the little world I govern is right by the clock; yet here have I sat two golden hours, unprofitably idle. And here must I sit, busy or idle, till the village bell come over the fields with noon, for, in humble imitation of Alfieri, who had himself chained to his chair to conquer his truant humor, I am a prisoner to dressing-gown and good resolution till blessed "twelve" lets me out with the school-boys. What to do with this recusant pen, chained to my fingers like the oar to the galley-slave?

"Boz" has commenced the harvest of his laurels, but I wish he would suddenly drop his *cognito* and see the country under some other name. His swallow, I think, is not large, and, if a

week of our whole-hog regimen of compliment do not gorge him, it will be that he wears a vicarious stomach in his doublet. Quite as highly spiced would be the tributes he might pick up by the wayside—tributes without eyes or ears, exacting neither blushes nor disclaimers, neither toast nor speech responsive. I really think, that, making the round of our country under the happy name of Smith, and lifting his mask here and there to those who struck his fancy, Dickens might leave us with a sense deeper and sweeter of our love for his genius, than he is likely to gather with the vexed brains and morning headaches of his *ovation.* Everybody knows him. Everybody loves him. And, faith! I don't see why he should be much pitied, after all! A man might bear such popularity as his, whatever "questionable shape" it could assume. At his age to "put a girdle round the earth" as broad as the language in which he writes, and, following it three thousand miles west, to find it embroidered with a great nation in *alto relievo*—(*raised* to meet him)—this is a lifetime renown to make Milton stare back over the walls of Paradise—to make Dante swear by his own Inferno that he was born six centuries too soon! It is Charles Dickens's due, no doubt, and the payment of these airy dues, prompt and honest as it is, would come with a better grace if a per-centage of the vast sale of his works were not also Charles Dickens's due! If State debts could be paid in complimentary dinners, however, "Mississippi" and "Governor McNutt" might not be by-words on the London Exchange. We are a famous nation for paying—compliments! I wish to God we were not as famous for robbing authors.

May Henry Clay (whom God bless!) take at the flood this

popular enthusiasm for a pillaged author, and lead it on to the amendment of our law of copyright.

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You are to understand this line of stars as expressing a domestic eclipse of three weeks, during which I have made my apparition in most of our principal cities, seen the "Boz Ball," and aired my holiday clothes and my holiday manners. It was partly business that took me off so suddenly, and partly *Boz*-iness, I am free to confess. I wished to see this most loveable of authors wearing his bays, and I felt my heart with the country—discreet or indiscreet in its rush to do him honor. So over the hills I jolted—three days and nights in spring-less lumber wagons, (substitutes for coaches in the muddy months,) and, well qualified for any stand-up amusement, I joined the great multitude at the Park. With the cobwebs newly brushed out of my eyes, I was, of course, susceptible to all the illusions of lights, loveliness and music, and to me it was very enchanting work. Dickens's joyous countenance and the bonhomie and simplicity of his manners heightened, I thought, even the expectant enthusiasm with which his admirers had come to the ball, and it is enough to say he lost no hearts that night—for all changes to him, in the tenure of that commodity, must be losses. He seemed, himself, in all honesty of feeling, delighted with his reception—*sans arriere pensée*, if I may be-French you a little. It was an anomaly to see a Dives in literature—a man of great genius receiving his "good things in this life," and it was an anomaly to see a man of deep thoughts wearing "his heart on his sleeve," like a merry school-boy. He reflected everybody's smile—as gaily unembarrassed among the loving looks and bright eyes as a bird in a garden. There was a

delicate line to hit, between reserve and condescension, between embarrassment and insensibility—a difficult part to play, altogether—and Boz was made for it. He is what Balzac calls *un expansif*—with good humor enough, and address, and spirit, sufficiently prompt and mercurial, to spread himself over as much of the world as can get near him, bodily. "Popular" is a misused word, but, in its best sense, Dickens is popular—popular in his boots as in his books, the right mind for the people and the right man for the people—rind and core of the same clear ripeness and sweetness. The very young ladies have been somewhat disappointed in his beauty, (as they would be, no doubt, in the Apollo's, if that gentleman were off his pedestal and walking about, dressed like Mr. Dickens,) but I do not believe one has seen him without loving him. He is exempt from the disenchantment common and fatal to most "idols taking a walk."

"But tell us something about the ball," quoth you. Truly there is little left to tell after the morning papers have had their will of it. There is always, at every great ball I ever heard of, one complete marvel in the shape of a girl of sixteen, of unknown coinage, but virgin gold—the cynosure of all eyes; and such a one I spent my moment in watching, paying, to that extent, my willing tribute to her beauty. She had an old-fashioned face, moulded after Stuart Newton's ideal, with nothing in it, except the complexion, which fifty years could no more than mellow. I should like to know the race of that girl—I should like to know by what fathering and mothering such features, and frame, and countenance are brought about. Faultlessly dressed, graceful, dignified, and so beautiful—and dancing only with men whom nobody knew, and who had, (affinities governing,) no right

on earth to know her—it was a precious traverse altogether. I so far overstepped by usual let-slide philosophy as to nudge a very earnest looker-on, and beg pardon for asking the lady's name, but, without removing his eyes from the little bright teeth just then disclosing with a smile, he expressed a wish to be informed on the subject himself—phrasing his reply, however, with more emphasis than piety.

A hint from one of the managers that a certain small curtain near the stage box, was the *introitus* to champagne and oysters, coupled (the hint) with the agreeable request that I would follow thither in the suite of Mrs. Dickens, drew me out of the charmed circle of the incognita, and I saw her no more.

As to any other of the "abouts" of the ball, my dear friend, I fear I cannot minister to your aristocratic taste, for, in all mixed societies, I ply among the plebeians—preferring a rude novelty to polished platitude. Your friends were all there (I heard) in the boxes. I was on the floor. Not dancing—for, "at my time of life," etc., etc.—but being amused—studying the nice line of manners by the departures from it—thanking Heaven for degrees in all things—seeking what, no doubt, gives zest to an angel's errand on earth, change from the stereotype of perfection. I must say it is a great charm in vulgarians, that, as Sir Fopling says, "you never know what the devil they may do next," while *au contraire*, the dead certainty of sequence, under all circumstances, in polite society, makes of it the very treadmill of pleasure.

I have not told you "about" Mrs. Dickens, however. She was, of course, the star of the evening, second in brightness. Great interest was felt on seeing her, the world being aware that she had loved the leading star of the night without knowing his

"place in the heavens," and wedded him before his rising. And besides this, there was the interest felt always in the wife of a man of genius—priestess as she is to the bright fire—nearest and dearest to the wondrous heart which supplies to his imaginations all their reality—model as she must be for the subtlest delineations of pure love, the truest and fairest features of his pictures of woman. She has risen with him, she and her children, a cluster of stars around him, and the world is perhaps not overstepping the limit of delicacy in bending, on the whole constellation, the telescope of affectionate curiosity. Mrs. Dickens seemed to me a woman worthy to count her hours by Master Humphrey's clock—appreciative, to the extremest nerve, of her husband's genius, and feeling, with exquisite sensibility, the virtuous quality and the prodigal overflowing of his fame. They have four children. Dickens showed me a delicious drawing of them by his friend Maclise, with Grip the raven perched gravely on the back of the chair in which the youngest was seated. Separation from these seems to be the only alloy in their pleasure among us, and I fear they will be drawn home sooner than were otherwise best by this powerful chain. God give them a happy reunion!

As to other and more general "Boziana," are they not written in the Dailies and glorified in the "Extras?" It would interest you, perhaps, could I describe the tribute of some literary milliner, which came in while I was calling, on the day of the ball—a very smart bonnet with a very smart plume, for Mrs. Dickens; but for that, and for the anonymous bouquets which entered, like a well-timed floral procession, one every half hour, you must draw on your imagination. To my thinking, the milliner's tribute was very national, and quite as well worth

Dickens's thanks as the diamond snuff-boxes which have conveyed to him the homage of nobility.

I should have something to tell you of the Dickens dinner, had I been there. But the obscurest diner-out, in these days, is not safe from the indiscretion of friends who have sentences to round off, and the calling on a hen for an egg, while she stands on the fence, would seem to me reasonable in comparison with asking for my sentiments to be delivered on my legs. However my progeny may swim or fly, I am a barn-door fowl, and must have a quiet incubation. So, the morning after the ball, I flitted like a ghost before cock-crowing—content to let Mathews and Duer, and others more "to the *manner* born," accomplish their delivery in what posture it pleased God. These gentlemen, by the way, threw the whole force of their eloquence into the cause of copyright, and for that they deserve the thanks of authors, and they have mine. The question is one of such simple justice that it only needs, like the "boots of Boss Richards," to be "kept before the people." Author-land is the desecrated Holy-land of our time, and the crusade for its recovery from degradation is now afoot—Cooper, "on his own hook," doing noble service.

Let railroads be glorified! The boy, longing for seven-league boots—the frost-ridden yearnings to up wing and speed southerly with the birds—may be satisfied now. I found friends in the cars, and it seemed to me that I had been translated from New York to Washington in a morning call. A glance at a newspaper, a little chat about Dickens, an exchange of news and happenings, a glance at Jersey and Maryland and the pair of dark eyes in the corner, and lo! the Capitol! *Quanto mutatus ab*

stage-coach! And changed too are the road-sideries! (Mayn't one make a word, pray?) The once clammy-banistered and be-niggered hotel in Philadelphia (the "United States") is now like the union of an English club with an English country-house—clean as quakerism, tastefully appointed, vigilantly served, and no less elegant than comfortable. Never before have I found a hotel in Philadelphia which was a fair exponent of that refined city. Then Barnum's in Baltimore has "cast its slough," and is florescent in elegancies, (a shade flowery too in its bills,) and altogether it is easier than it used to be, (to others besides "rising young men,") to get to Washington. Here, to be sure, in the matter of provender, you perceive the difference in your latitude. "Point Comfort" is farther south. But Washington is a great place for "steering wide," and there is enough to enjoy in its troubled waters, particularly for those who know the value of "favoring Gales."

It is all hack-ing at Washington, so I hack'd up to the Capitol, (Morris merely says, "thou shalt not hack it *down*,") and made straight for Greenough's statue. Ye gods! who is his enemy? Why is the statue not covered, till a light is found for it? Why are the masons at work, building it up a second time where it stands, when the shadow of the brows covers the whole face, and the shadows of the chest are so misplaced that the abdomen looks contracted like that of a man in pain. And so of the rest. It is all perverted—all seen to disadvantage—and yet thousands of people have flocked to see it, and (not as in Italy, where the error of its position would be at once understood and allowed for) every spectator goes away with an uneasy doubt of its effect—an unexplained dissatisfaction with the statue. Force your

eyes through the darkness—generalize the details by a vigorous effort of imagination, and you can see, afar off, the grand design of the artist, and form some idea of what it would be, well lighted. Greenough should be here—he should have been here when it was first posed—and, till he come, it should only be exhibited by torch-light. My own impression is, that it will never be properly lighted in the Rotunda, unless the dome is pierced; and, light it as you will, while it stands in such close contrast with other works of art of the size of life, it will be less effective there than elsewhere. Standing in the place of the column of naval trophies in the front of the Capitol, with a lofty dome built over it, it would be seen by those ascending to the House, in all its grandeur. This only by way of random suggestion, however. I am no authority in such matters. Greenough's genius is one which requires no delicacy in the handling, and the suggestion is not to him. He can put his statue where it will exact from all beholders its due of admiration; but, loving his genius as I do, loving the man, as every one does who knows his great and sweet qualities, I would express here the impatience I feel at the inevitable though temporary misappreciation of his work.

Turning on my heel in a very ill humor, I found myself opposite Chapman's Baptism of Pocahontas. I had read a score of criticisms on this painting, some favorable and some not, and from the whole had made up my mind to see a very different quality of picture. In my opinion no writer has done justice to it, or rather, the upshot of what criticism it has elicited gives altogether an erroneous impression as to Mr. Chapman's success. It is a peculiar picture, conceived and executed in a severe style of art,

and is not such a miracle as to be incapable of exception or criticism; but it is a noble design, exquisitely colored, and the whole effect is at once to transcend and supplant the spectator's previous conception of the scene portrayed. As one of the republican sovereigns by whose order it was painted, I pronounce myself entirely satisfied, and wish we may get as much honor for our money on the other panels.

I passed an hour or two in the Gallery of the House, renewing my eyesight acquaintance with some of the nation's counsellors, and was not a little amused by a group of lookers-on close by, and their standard of legislative distinction. They were pointing out to each other the different members, with the one commentary, "he's pluck," or, "he isn't pluck," and, positively, in half an hour's calling over of great names to which I listened, there was passed on them no other comment. To be "pluck," it would seem, is the great claim to the *digito monstrari* at Washington—though, (if one may "tell Priam so,") it would be a better reading in the sense of "pluck up drowned honor by the locks." Mr. Wise, by the way, in a speech most eloquently delivered that morning, went into a vindication of the irregularities of the House, and satisfied me, not that he was right in his argument, but that he was a natural orator of a high order. I thought few at Washington seemed quite aware of the feeling, at the outer end of the radius, touching the "gentle amenities" which have distinguished the last two sessions of Congress.

I saw the President, and found him a more benevolent and younger and better looking man than any of his portraits. I saw, at a distance only, our peerless "Harry," "built round" with noble dignity, expressing in his lofty presence his country's

estimate of his qualities. Clay looks the President—prophetically, I hope and trust. And all the people say Amen!—at least all those with whom I have chanced to converse on the subject.

After two days of the pendulum life at Washington, going and coming between the White House and the Capitol, I turned once more toward the teetotal zone, ("temperate" will scarce express it,) and was in Philadelphia with a magician's "*presto!*" For the first time in my life, I saw a city with a look of depression. Commonly a public distress has no outward countenance. The houses and equipages, the children and the shop-windows, the very sufferers themselves when abroad, wear the habitual aspect of occupation and prosperity. Not so now in Philadelphia. It is a city of troubled brows and anxious lips; and you have scarce walked an hour in the street before you become infected with the depressed atmosphere, and long to be away. You see why I do not play the *petit courier des dames,* as my country friends exact of me in my travels. I used to send you the fashions, after a walk in Chestnut Street. No place like it for an *affiche des modes!* But, though a fine day, and the pavement as tempting as the bank of the Arno in April, not a petticoat did I see abroad with which a brown paper parcel would have been an incongruity. For the fashions, indeed, though I was at a singularly brilliant party (concert and ball) given to Dickens the night after, in New York, I saw nothing but anarchy. The plump wear the tight sleeve—becoming to plumptitude. The thin wear the *gigot* and its varieties—becoming to thinliness. Yes—*one* "new wrinkle!" Ears have been put out of fashion by some one who had reasons for concealing hers, and the hair is worn in a bandage, smooth down

from the apex of the forehead over temples and ears, and gathered in a knot, well under the bump of philoprogenitiveness. It is pretty—on a pretty woman—as what is not?

And now, having told you all I know of

—"the violets,
That strew the green lap of the new-come Spring,"

(violets, in the city, meaning news and fashions,) I must lay aside this abominable pen, mended once too often for the purity of my scrivening finger, and dismiss my letter to the post. Adieu.

LETTER XX.

Dear Doctor: You want a letter upon landscape gardening—*apropos* of your delight in Downing's elegant and tempting book on Rural Architecture. It is a pleasant subject to expand upon, and I am not surprised that men, sitting amid hot editorials in a city, (the month of July,) find a certain facility in creating woods and walks, planting hedges and building conservatories. So may the brain be refreshed, I well know, even with the smell of printing ink in the nostrils. But landscape gardening, as within the reach of the small farmer people, is quite another thing, and to be managed (as brain-gardening need not be, to be sure) with economy and moderation. Tell us in the quarterlies, if you will, what a man may do with a thousand acres and plenty of money; but I will endeavor to show what may be done with fifty acres and a spare hour in the evening—by the tasteful farmer, or the tradesman retired on small means. These own their fifty acres, (more or less,) up to the sky and down to the bottom of their "diggings," and as Nature lets the tree grow and the flower expand for a man, without reference to his account at the bank, they have it in their power to embellish, and, most commonly, they have also the inclination. Beginners, however, at this, as at

most other things, are at the mercy of injudicious counsel, and few books can be more expensively misapplied than the treatises on landscape gardening.

The most intense and sincere lovers of the country are citizens who have fled to rural life in middle age, and old travellers who are weary, heart and foot, and long for shelter and rest. Both these classes of men are ornamental in their tastes—the first, because the country is his passion, heightened by abstinence; and the latter, because he remembers the secluded and sweet spots he has crossed in travel, and yearns for something that resembles them, of his own. To begin at the beginning, I will suppose such a man, as either of these, in search of land to purchase and build upon. His means are moderate.

Leaving the climate and productiveness of soil out of the question, the main things to find united are *shade, water*, and *inequality of surface.* With these three features given by Nature, any spot may be made beautiful, and at very little cost; and, fortunately for purchasers in this country, most land is valued and sold with little or no reference to these or other capabilities for embellishment. Water, in a country so laced with rivers, is easily found. Yet there are hints worth giving, perhaps, obvious as they seem, even in the selection of water. A small and rapid river is preferable to a large river or lake. The Hudson, for instance, is too broad to bridge, and, beautiful as the sites are upon its banks, the residents have but one egress and one drive—the country behind them. If they could cross to the other side, and radiate in every direction in their evening drives, the villas on that noble river would be trebled in value. One soon tires of riding up and down one bank of a river, and, without a taste for boating. the

beautiful expanse of water soon becomes an irksome barrier. Very much the same remark is true of the borders of lakes, with the additional objection, that there is no variety to the view. A small, bright stream, such as hundreds of nameless ones in these beautiful northern States—spanned by bridges at every half mile, followed always by the roads which naturally seek the level, and winding into picturesque surprises, appearing and disappearing continually—is, in itself, an ever-renewing poem, crowded with changeable pictures, and every day tempting you to follow or trace back its bright current. Small rivers, again, insure to a degree the other two requisites—shade and inequality of surface—the interval being proportionately narrow, and, backed by slopes and alluvial soil, usually producing the various nut and maple trees, which, for their fruit and sap, have been spared by the inexorable axes of the first settlers. If there is any land in the country, the price of which is raised from the supposed desirableness of the site, it is upon the lakes and larger rivers, leaving the smaller rivers, fortunately, still within the scale of the people's means.

One more word as to the selection of a spot. The rivers in the United States, more than those of older countries, are variable in their quantity of water. The banks of many of the most picturesque, present, at the season of the year when we most wish it otherwise, (in the sultry heats of August and September,) bared rocks or beds of ooze, while the stream runs sluggishly and uninvitingly between. Those which are fed principally by springs, however, are less liable to the effects of drought than those which are the outlets of large bodies of water; and, indeed, there is great difference in rivers in this respect, depending on the degree

in which their courses are shaded, and other causes. It will be safest, consequently, to select a site in August. when the water is at the lowest, preferring, of course, a bold and high bank as a protection against freshets and flood-wood. The remotest chance of a war with water, damming against wash and flood, fills an old settler with economical alarm.

It was doubtless a "small chore" for the deluge to heave up a mound or slope a bank, but, with one spade at a dollar a day, the moving of earth is a discouraging job; and, in selecting a place to live, it is well to be apprised what diggings may become necessary, and how your hay and water, wood, visitors, and lumber generally, are to come and go. A man's first fancy is commonly to build on a hill; but as he lives on, year after year, he would like his house lower and lower, till, if the fairies had done it for him at each succeeding wish, he would trouble them at last to dig his cellar at the bottom. It is hard mounting a hill daily, with tired horses, and it is dangerous driving down with full-bellied ones from the stable-door, and your friends deduct, from the pleasure of seeing you, the inconvenience of ascending and descending. The view, for which you build high, you soon discover is not daily bread, but an occasional treat—more worth, as well as better liked for the walk to get it, and (you have selected your site, of course, with a southern exposure) a good stiff hill at your back, nine months in the year, saves several degrees of the thermometer, and sundry chimney-tops, barn-roofs, and other furniture peripatetic in a tempest. Then your hill-road washes with the rains, and needs continual mending, and the dweller on the hill needs one more horse and two more oxen than the dweller in the valley. One thing more. There rises a night-mist, (never

unwholesome from running water,) which protects fruit-trees from frost, to a certain level above the river, at certain critical seasons; and so end the reasons for building low.

I am supposing all along, dear reader, that you have had no experience of country life, but that, sick of a number in a brick block, or (if a traveller) weary of "the perpetual flow of people," you want a patch of the globe's surface to yourself, and room enough to scream, let off champagne-corks, or throw stones, without disturbance to your neighbor. The intense yearning for this degree of liberty has led some seekers after the pastoral rather farther into the wilderness than was necessary; and, while writing on the subject of a selection of rural sites, it is worth while, perhaps, to specify the desirable degree of neighborhood.

In your own person, probably, you do not combine blacksmith, carpenter, tinman, grocer, apothecary, wet-nurse, dry-nurse, washerwoman, and doctor. Shoes and clothes can wait your convenience for mending; but the little necessities supplied by the above list of vocations are rather imperative, and they can only be ministered to, in any degree of comfortable perfection, by a village of at least a thousand inhabitants. Two or three miles is far enough to send your horse to be shod, and far enough to send for doctor or washerwoman, and half the distance would be better, if there were no prospect of the extension of the village limits. But the common diameter of idle boys' rambles is a mile out of the village, and to be just beyond that is very necessary, if you care for your plums and apples. The church-bell should be within hearing, and it is mellowed deliciously by a mile or two of hill and dale, and your wife will probably belong to a "sewing-circle," to which it is very much for her health to walk, especially

if the horse is wanted for ploughing. This suggests to me another point which I had nearly overlooked.

The farmer pretends to no "gentility;" I may be permitted to say, therefore, that neighbors are a luxury, both expensive and inconvenient. The necessity you feel for society, of course, will modify very much the just-stated considerations on the subject of vicinage. He who has lived only in towns, or passed his life (as travellers do) only as a receiver of hospitality, is little aware of the difference between a country and city call, or between receiving a visit and paying one. In town, "not at home," in any of its shapes, is a great preserver of personal liberty, and gives no offence. In the country you are "at home," *will-you, nill-you.* As a stranger paying a visit, you choose the time most convenient to yourself, and abridge the call at pleasure. In your own house, the visitor may find you at a very inconvenient hour, stay a very inconvenient time, and, as you have no liberty to deny yourself at your country door, it may (or may not, I say, according to your taste) be a considerable evil. This point should be well settled, however, before you determine your distance from a closely-settled neighborhood; for many a man would rather send his horse two miles further to be shod, than live within the convenience of "sociable neighbors." A resident in a city, by-the-way, (and it is a point which should be kept in mind by the retiring metropolitan,) has, properly speaking, no neighbors. He has friends, chosen or made by similarity of pursuit, congeniality of taste, or accident which might have been left unimproved. His literal neighbors he knows by name—if they keep a brass plate—but they are contented to know as little of him, and the acquaintance ends, without offence, in the perusal

of the name and number on the door. In the city, you pick your friends. In the country, you "take them in the lump."

True, country neighbors are almost always desirable acquaintances—simple in their habits, and pure in their morals and conversation. But this letter is addressed to men retiring from the world, who look forward to the undisturbed enjoyment of trees and fields, who expect life to be filled up with the enjoyment of dew at morn, shade at noon, and the glory of sunset and starlight; and who consider the complete repose of the articulating organs, and release from oppressive and unmeaning social observances, as the fruition of Paradise. To men who have experience or philosophy enough to have reduced life to this, I should recommend a distance of five miles from any village or any family with grown-up daughters. In this practical sermon, I may be forgiven for remarking, also, that this degree of seclusion doubles an income, (by enabling a man to live on half of it,) and so, freeing the mind from the care of pelf, removes the very gravest of the obstacles to happiness. I refer to no saving which infringes on comfort. The housekeeper who caters for her own family in an unvisited seclusion, and the housekeeper who provides for her family with an eye to the possible or probable interruption of acquaintances not friends, live at very different rates; and the latter adds one dish to the bounty of the table, perhaps, but two to its vanity. Still more in the comfort and expensiveness of dress. The natural and most blissful costume of man in summer, all told, is shirt, slippers, and pantaloons. The compulsory articles of coat, suspenders, waistcoat, and cravat, (gloves would be ridiculous,) are a tribute paid to the chance of visitors, as is also, probably, some dollars' difference in the quality of the hat.

I say nothing of the comfort of a bad hat, (one you can sit upon, or water your horse from, or bide the storm in, without remorse,) nor of the luxury of having half a dozen, which you do when they are cheap, and so saving the mental burthen of retaining the geography of an article so easily mislaid. A man is a slave to anything on his person he is afraid to spoil—a slave (if he is not rich, as we are not, dear reader!) to any costly habiliment whatever. The trees nod no less graciously, (it is a pleasure to be able to say,) because one's trowsers are of a rational volume over the portion most tried by a sedentary man, nor because one's hat is of an equivocal shape—having served as a non-conductor between a wet log and its proprietor; but ladies do—especially country ladies; and even if they did not, there is enough of the leaven of youth, even in philosophers, to make them unwilling to appear to positive disadvantage, and unless you are quite at your ease as to even the ridiculous shabbiness of your outer man, there is no liberty—no economical liberty, I mean—in rural life. Do not mislead yourself, dear reader! I am perfectly aware that a Spanish sombrero, a pair of large French trowsers plaited over the hips, a well-made English shoe, and a handsome checked shirt, form as easy a costume for the country as philosopher could desire. But I write for men who must attain the same comfort in a shirt of a perfectly independent description, trowsers, oftenest, that have seen service as tights, and show a fresher dye in the seams, a hat, price twenty-five cents, (by the dozen,) and shoes of a remediless capriciousness of outline.

I acknowledge that such a costume is a liberty with daylight, which should only be taken within one's own fence, and that it is a misfortune to be surprised in it by a stranger, even there. But I

wish to impress upon those to whom this letter is addressed, the obligations of country neighborhood as to dress and table, and the expediency of securing the degree of liberty which may be desired, by a barrier of distance. Sociable country neighbors, as I said before, are a luxury, but they are certainly an expensive one. Judging by data within my reach, I should say that a man who could live for fifteen hundred dollars a year, within a mile of a sociable village, could have the same personal comforts at ten miles' distance for half the money. He numbers, say fifteen families, in his acquaintance; and, of course, pays at the rate of fifty dollars a family for the gratification. Now it is a question whether you would not rather have the money in board fence or Berkshire hogs. You may like society, and yet not like it at such a high price. Or (but this would lead me to another subject) you may prefer society in a lump; and, with a house full of friends in the months of June and July, live in contemplative and economical solitude the remainder of the year. And this latter plan I take the liberty to recommend more particularly to students and authors.

Touching "grounds." The first impulses of taste are dangerous to follow, no less from their blindness to unforeseen combinations, than from their expensiveness. In placing your house as far from the public road as possible, (and a considerable distance from dust and intrusion, seems at first a *sine qua non*,) you entail upon yourself a very costly appendage in the shape of a private road, which of course must be nicely gravelled and nicely kept. A walk or drive, within your gate, which is not hard and free from weeds, is as objectionable as an untidy white dress upon a lady; and, as she would be better clad in russet, your road were

better covered with grass. I may as well say that a hundred yards of gravel-walk, properly "scored," weeded, and rolled, will cost five dollars a month—a man's labor reckoned at the present usage. Now no person for whom this letter is written can afford to keep more than one man-servant for "chores." A hundred yards of gravel-walk, therefore, employing half his time, you can easily calculate the distribution of the remainder, upon the flower-garden, kitchen-garden, wood-shed, stable, and piggery. (The female "help" should *milk*, if I died for it!) My own opinion is, that fifty yards from the road is far enough, and twenty a more prudent distance; though, in the latter case, an impervious screen of shrubbery along your outer fence is indispensable.

The matter of gravel-walks embraces several points of rural comfort, and, to do without them, you must have no young ladies in your acquaintance, and, especially, no young gentlemen from the cities. It may never have occurred to you in your sidewalk life, that the dew falls in the country with tolerable regularity; and that from sundown to ten in the forenoon, you are as much insulated in a cottage surrounded with high grass, as on a rock surrounded with forty fathom water—shod *a la mode*, I mean. People talk of being "pent up in a city," with perhaps twenty miles of flagged sidewalk extending from their door-stone! They are apt to draw a contrast, favorable to the liberty of cities, however, if they come thinly shod to the country, and must either wade in the grass or stumble through the ruts of a dusty road. If you wish to see bodies acted on by an "exhausted receiver," (giving out their "airs," of course,) shut up your young city friends in a country cottage, by the compulsion of wet grass

and muddy highways. Better gravel your whole farm, you say. But having reduced you to this point of horror, you are prepared to listen without contempt, while I suggest two humble *succedanea.*

First: On receiving intimation of a probable visit from a city friend, write by return of post for the size of her foot, (or *his.*) Provide immediately a pair of India-rubber shoes of the corresponding number, and, on the morning after your friend's arrival, be ready with them at the first horrified withdrawal of the damp foot from the grass. Your shoes may cost you a dollar a pair, but, if your visitors are not more than ten or twelve in the season, it is a saving of fifty per cent., at least in gravelling and weeding.

Or, Second: Enclose the two or three acres immediately about your house with a ring fence, and pasture within it a small flock of sheep. They are clean and picturesque, (your dog should be taught to keep them from the doors and porticoes,) and, by feeding down the grass to a continual greensward, they give the dew a chance to dry off early, and enlarge your cottage "liberties" to the extent of their browsings.

I may as well add, by the way, that a walk with the sod simply taken off, is, in this climate, dry enough, except for an hour or two after a heavy rain; and, besides the original saving in gravel, it is kept clean with a quarter of the trouble. A weed imbedded in stones is a much more obstinate customer than a score of them sliced from the smooth ground. At any rate, out with them! A neglected walk indicates that worst of country diseases, a mind grown slovenly and slip-slop! Your house may go unpainted, and your dress (with one exception) submit to the course of events—but be scrupulous in the whiteness of your

linen, tenacious of the neatness of your gravel-walks; and, while these points hold, you are at a redeemable remove from the lapse (fatally prone and easy) into barbarianism and misanthropy.

Before I enter upon the cultivation of grounds, let me lay before the reader my favorite idea of a cottage—not a *cottage ornée* but a *cottage insoucieuse*, if I may coin a phrase. In the valley of Sweet Waters, on the banks of the Barbyses, there stands a small pleasure-palace of the Sultan, which looks as if it was dropped into the green lap of Nature, like a jewel-case on a birthday, with neither preparation on the part of the bestower, nor disturbance on the part of the receiver. From the balcony's foot on every side extends an unbroken sod to the horizon. Gigantic trees shadow the grass here and there, and an enormous marble vase, carved in imitation of a sea-shell, turns the silver Barbyses in a curious cascade over its lip; but else, it is all Nature's lap, with its bauble resting in velvet—no gardens, no fences, no walls, no shrubberies—a beautiful valley, with the sky resting on its rim, and nothing in it save one fairy palace. The simplicity of the thing enchanted me, and, in all my yearnings after rural seclusion, this vision of old travel has, more or less, colored my fancy. You see what I mean, with half an eye. Gardens are beautiful, shrubberies ornamental, summer-houses and alleys, and gravelled paths, all delightful—but they are, each and all, taxes—heavy taxes on mind, time, and money. Perhaps you like them. Perhaps you want the occupation. But *some* men, of small means, like a contemplative idleness in the country. Some men's time never hangs heavily under a tree. Some men like to lock their doors, (or to be at liberty to do so,) and be gone for a month, without dread of gardens plundered, flowers trod down,

shrubs browsed off by cattle. Some men like nothing out of doors but that which can take care of itself—the side of a house or a forest-tree, or an old horse in a pasture. These men, too, like that which is beautiful, and for such I draw this picture of the *cottage insoucieuse.* What more simply elegant than a pretty structure in the lap of a green dell! What more convenient! What so economical! Sheep (we may "return to muttons") are cheaper "help" than men, and if they do not keep your green-sward so brightly mown, they crop it faithfully and turn the crop to better account. The only rule of perfect independence in the country is to make no "improvement" which requires more attention than the making. So—you are at liberty to take your wife to the Springs. So—you can join a coterie at Niagara at a letter's warning. So—you can spend a winter in Italy without leaving half your income to servants who keep house at home. So—you can sleep without dread of hail-storms on your graperies or green-houses, without blunderbuss for depredators of fruit, without distress at slugs, cut-worms, drought, or breachy cattle. Nature is prodigal of flowers, grapes are cheaper bought than raised, fruit *idem,* butter *idem,* (though you mayn't think so,) and, as for amusement—the man who can not find it between driving, fishing, shooting, strolling, and reading, (to say nothing of less selfish pleasures,) has no business in the country. He should go back to town.

LETTER XXI.

[The following letter was addressed to a young gentleman of —— College, who is "bit by the dipsas" of authorship. His mother, a sensible, plain farmer's widow, chanced to be my companion, for a couple of days, in a stage-coach, and, while creeping over the mountains between the Hudson and the Susquehannah, she paid my common sense the compliment of unburthening a very stout heart to me. Since her husband's death, she has herself managed the farm, and, by active, personal oversight, has contrived "to make both ends so far lap," (to use her own expression,) as to keep her only boy at college. By her description, he is a slenderish lad in his constitution, fond of poetry, and bent on trying his fortune with his pen, as soon as he has closed his thumb and finger on his degree. The good dame wished for the best advice I could give him on the subject, leaving it to me (after producing a piece of his poetry from her pocket, published in one of the city papers) to encourage or dissuade. I apprehended a troublesome job of it, but after a very genial conversation, (on the subject of raising turkeys, in which she quite agreed with me, that they were cheaper bought than raised, when corn was fifty cents a bushel—greedy gobblers!) I reverted to the topic of poetry, and promised to write the inspired sophomore my views as to his prospects.

Thus runs the letter:—]

Dear Sir: You will probably not recognize the handwriting in which you are addressed, but, by casting your eye to the conclusion of the letter, you will see that it comes from an old stager

in periodical literature; and of that, as a profession, I am requested by your mother to give you, as she phrases it, "the cost and yield." You will allow what right you please to my opinions, and it is only with the authority of having lived by the pen, that I pretend to offer any hints on the subject for your guidance. As "the farm" can afford you nothing beyond your education, you will excuse me for presuming that you need information mainly as to the *livelihood* to be got from literature.

Your mother thinks it is a poor market for potatoes, where potatoes are to be had for nothing; and that is simply the condition of American literature, (as protected by law.) The contributors to the numerous periodicals of England, are the picked men of thousands—the accepted of hosts rejected—the flower of a highly-educated and refined people—soldiers, sailors, lords, ladies, and lawyers—all at leisure, all anxious to turn a penny, all ambitious of print and profit; and this great army, in addition to the hundreds urged by need and pure literary zeal—this great army, I say, are before you in the market, offering their wares to your natural customer, at a price for which you can not afford to sell —*nothing!* It is true that, by this state of the literary market, you have fewer competitors among your countrymen—the best talent of the country being driven, by necessity, into less congenial and more profitable pursuits; but even with this advantage (none but *doomed authors* in the field) you would probably find it difficult, within five years after you graduated, to convert your best piece of poetry into a genuine dollar. I allow you, at the same time, full credit for your undoubted genius.

You naturally inquire how American authors live. I answer, by being *English* authors. There is no American author who

lives by his pen, for whom London is not the chief market. Those whose books sell *only* in this country, make scarce the wages of a day-laborer—always excepting religious writers, and the authors of school-books, and such works as owe their popularity to extrinsic causes. To begin on leaving college, with legitimate book-making—writing novels, tales, volumes of poetry, &c., you must have at least five years' support from some other source, for, until you get a name, nothing you could write would pay "board and lodging;" and "getting a name" in America, implies having first got a name in England. Then we have almost no professed, mere authors. They have vocations of some other character, also. Men like Dana, Bryant, Sprague, Halleck, Kennedy, Wetmore, though, no doubt, it is the first wish of their hearts to devote all their time to literature, are kept, by our atrocious laws of copyright, in paths less honorable to their country, but more profitable to themselves; and by far the greatest number of discouraged authors are "broken on the wheel" of the public press. Gales, Walsh, Chandler, Buckingham, and other editors of that stamp, are men driven aside from authorship their proper vocation.

Periodical writing seems the natural novitiate to literary fame in our country, and I understand from your mother that through this lies your chosen way. I must try to give you as clear an idea as possible of the length and breadth of it, and perhaps I can best do so by contrasting it with another career, which (if advice were not always useless) I should sooner advise.

Your mother's farm, then, consisting of near a hundred acres, gives a net produce of about five hundred dollars a year—hands paid, I mean, and seed, wear and tear of tools, team, &c., first

subtracted. She has lived as comfortable as usual for the last three or four years, and still contrived to lay by the two hundred and fifty dollars expended annually on your education. Were you at home, your own labor and oversight would add rather more than two hundred dollars to the income, and with good luck you might call yourself a farmer with five hundred dollars, as the Irish say, "to the fore." Your vocation, at the same time, is dignified, and such as would reflect favorably on your reputation, should you hereafter become in any way eminent. During six months in the year, you would scarce find more than an hour or two in the twenty-four to spare from sleep or labor; but, in the winter months, with every necessary attention to your affairs out of doors, still find as much leisure for study and composition as most literary men devote to those purposes. I say nothing of the *pabulum* of rural influences on your mind, but will just hint at another incidental advantage you may not have thought of, viz: that the public show much more alacrity in crowning an author, if he does not make bread and butter of the laurels! In other words, if you are a farmer, you are supposed (by a world not very brilliant in its conclusions) to expend the most of your mental energies (as they do) in making your living; and your literature goes for an "aside"—waste-water, as the millers phrase it—a very material premise in both criticism and public estimation.

At your age, the above picture would have been thrown away on myself, and I presume (inviting as it seems to my world-weary eyes) it is thrown away now upon you. I shall therefore try to present to you the lights and shadows of the picture which seem to you more attractive.

Your first step will be to select New York as the city which is to be illustrated by your residence, and to commence a search after some literary occupation. You have a volume of poetry which has been returned to you by your "literary agent," with a heavy charge for procuring the refusal of every publisher to undertake it; and, with your pride quite taken out of you, you are willing to devote your Latin and Greek, your acquaintance with prosody and punctuation, and a very middling proficiency in chirography (no offence—your mother showed me your autograph list of bills for the winter term)—all this store of accomplishment you offer to employ for a trifle besides meat, lodging, and apparel. These, you say, are surely moderate expectations for an educated man, and such wares, so cheap, must find a ready market. Of such stuff, you know that editors are made; and, in the hope of finding a vacant editorial chair, you pocket your MSS., and commence inquiry. At the end of the month, you begin to think yourself the one person on earth for whom there seems no room. There is no editor wanted, no sub-editor wanted, no reporter, no proof-reader, no poet! There are passable paragraphists by scores—educated young men, of every kind, of *promising* talent, who, for twenty dollars a month, would joyfully do twice what you propose—give twice as much time, and furnish twice as much "copy." But as you design, of *course*, to "go into society," and gather your laurels as they blossom, you cannot see your way very clearly with less than a hay-maker's wages. You proceed with your inquiries, however, and are, at last, quite convinced that few things are more difficult than to coin uncelebrated brains into current money—that the avenues for the employment of the *head, only*, are emulously crowded—

that there are many more than you had supposed who have the same object as yourself, and that, whatever fame may be in its meridian and close, its morning is mortification and starvation.

The "small end of the horn" *has* a hole in it, however, and the bitter stage of experience I have just described, might be omitted in your history, if, by any other means, you could be made small enough to go in. The most considerable diminution of size, perhaps, is the getting rid, for the time, of all idea of "living like a gentleman," (according to the common acceptation of the phrase.) To be willing to satisfy hunger in any clean and honest way, to sleep in any clean and honest place, and to wear anything clean and honestly paid for, are phases of the crescent moon of fame, not very prominently laid down in our imaginary chart; but they are, nevertheless, the first indication of that moon's *waxing*. I see by the advertisements, that there are facilities now for cheap living, which did not exist "when George the Third was king." A dinner (of beef, bread, and potatoes, with a bottle of wine) is offered, by an advertiser, of the savory name of Goslin, for a shilling, and a breakfast, most invitingly described, is offered for sixpence. I have no doubt a lodging might be procured at the same modest rate of charge. "Society" does not move on this plane, it is true, but society is not worth seeking at any great cost, while you are obscure; and, if you'll wait till the first moment when it would be agreeable, (the moment when it thinks it worth while to caress you,) it will come to you, like Mohammed to the mountain. And like the mountain's moving to Mohammed, you will find any premature ambition on the subject.

Giving up the expectation of finding employment suited to

your taste, you will, of course, be "open to offers;" and I should counsel you to take any that would pay, which did not positively shut the door upon literature. At the same wages, you had better direct covers in a newspaper office, than contribute original matter which costs you thought, yet is not appreciated; and in fact, as I said before with reference to farming, a subsistence not dilectly obtained by brain-work, is a material advantage to an author. Eight hours of mere mechanical copying, and two hours of leisurely composition, will tire you less, and produce more for your reputation than twelve hours of intellectual drudgery. The publishers and booksellers have a good deal of work for educated men—proof-reading, compiling, corresponding, &c., and this is a good step to higher occupation. As you moderate your wants, of course you enlarge your chances for employment.

Getting up in the world is like walking through a mist—your way opens as you get on. I should say that, with tolerable good fortune, you might make, by your pen, two hundred dollars the first year, and increase your income a hundred dollars annually, for five years. This, as a literary "operative." After that period, you would either remain stationary, a mere "workey," or your genius would discover, "by the dip of the divining-rod," where, in the well-searched bowels of literature, lay an unworked vein of ore. In the latter case, you would draw that one prize, in a thousand blanks, of which the other competitors in the lottery of fame feel as sure as yourself.

As a "stock" or "starring" player upon the literary stage, of course you desire a crowded audience; and it is worth your while, perhaps, to inquire (more curiously than is laid down in most advices to authors) what is the number and influence of the judi-

cious, and what nuts it is politic to throw to the groundlings. Abuse is, in criticism, what shade is in a picture, discord in harmony, acid in punch, salt in seasoning. Unqualified praise is the death of Tarpeia, and to be neither praised nor abused is more than death—it is inanition. *Query*—how to procure yourself to be abused? In your chemical course next year, you will probably give a morning's attention to the analysis of the pearl, among other precious substances; and you will be told by the professor, that it is the consequence of an excess of carbonate of lime in the flesh of the oyster—in other words, *the disease* of the sub-aqueous animal who produces it. Now, to copy this politic invalid—to learn wisdom of an oyster—find out what is the most pungent disease of your style, and hug it till it becomes a pearl. A fault carefully studied is the germ of a peculiarity; and a peculiarity is a pearl of great price to an author. The critics begin very justly by hammering at it as a fault, and, after it is polished into a peculiarity, they still hammer at it as a fault, and the noise they make attracts attention to the pearl; and up you come from the deep sea of obscurity, not the less intoxicated with the sunshine, because, but for your disease, you would never have seen it.

[To the above may be added a passage on the same subject, written in another place:]

YOUNG POETS.

An old man with no friend but his money—a fair child holding the hand of a Magdalen—a delicate bride given over to a coarse-minded bridegroom—were sights to be troubled at seeing. We should bleed at heart to see either of them. But there is some-

thing even more touching to us than these—something, too, which is the subject of heartless and habitual mockery by critics—the first timid offerings, to fame, of the youthful and sanguine poet. We declare that we never open a letter from one of this class, never read a preface to the first book of one of them, never arrest our critical eye upon a blemish in the immature page, without having the sensation of a tear coined in our heart—never without a passionate, though inarticulate, "God help you!" We know so well the rasping world in which they are to jostle, with their "fibre of sarcenet!" We know so well the injustices, the rebuffs, the sneers, the insensibilities, *from without*—the impatiences, the resentments, the choked impulses and smothered heart-boundings *within*. And yet it is not these outward penances, and inward scorpions, that cause us the most regret in the fate of the poet. Out of these is born the inspired expression of his anguish—like the plaint of the singing bird from the heated needle which blinds him. We mourn more over his *fatuous imperviousness to counsel*—over his haste to print, his slowness to correct—over his belief that the airy bridges he builds over the chasms in his logic and rhythm are passable, by avoirdupois on foot, as well as by Poesy on Pegasus. That the world is not as much enchanted—(that *we ourselves* are not as much touched and delighted)—with the halting flights of new poets as with the broken and short venturings in air of new-fledged birds—proves over again that the world we live in were a good enough Eden, if human nature were as loveable as the rest. We wish it were not so. We wish it were natural to admire anything human-made, that has not cost pain and trial. But, since we do not, and can not, it is a pity, we say again, that beginners in poetry are offended with kind coun-

sel. Of the great many books and manuscript poems we receive, there is never one from a young poet, which we do not long, in all kindness, to send back to him to be restudied, rewritten, and made, in finish, more worthy of the conception. To praise it in print only puts his industry to sleep, and makes him dream he has achieved what is yet far beyond him. We ask the young poets who read this, where would be the kindness in such a case?

THE FOUR RIVERS.*

THE HUDSON—THE MOHAWK—THE CHENANGO—THE SUSQUEHANNAH.

Some observer of Nature offered a considerable reward for two blades of striped grass exactly similar. The infinite diversity, of which this is one instance, exists in a thousand other features of Nature, but in none more strikingly than in the scenery of rivers. What two in the world are alike? How often does the attempt fail to compare the Hudson with the Rhine—the two, perhaps, among celebrated rivers, which are the nearest to a resemblance? Yet looking at the first determination of a river's course, and the natural operation of its search for the sea, one would suppose that, in a thousand features, their valleys would scarce be distinguishable.

I think, of all excitements in the world, that of the first discovery and exploration of a noble river, must be the most eager and enjoyable. Fancy "the bold Englishman," as the Dutch called Hendrich Hudson, steering his little yacht, the Halve-Mane,

* It was on the excursion here described, that the author first saw the spot which he afterwards made a residence, and where the foregoing letters were written.

for the first time through the Highlands! Imagine his anxiety for the channel, forgotten as he gazed up at the towering rocks, and round the green shores, and onward, past point and opening bend, miles away into the heart of the country; yet with no lessening of the glorious stream beneath him, and no decrease of promise in the bold and luxuriant shores! Picture him lying at anchor below Newburgh, with the dark pass of the "Wey-Gat" frowning behind him, the lofty and blue Cattskills beyond, and the hillsides around covered with the red lords of the soil, exhibiting only less wonder than friendliness. And how beautifully was the assurance of welcome expressed, when the "very kind old man" brought a bunch of arrows, and broke them before the stranger, to induce him to partake fearlessly of his hospitality!

The qualities of the Hudson are those most likely to impress a stranger. It chances felicitously that the traveller's first entrance beyond the sea-board is usually made by the steamer to Albany. The grand and imposing outlines of rock and horizon answer to his anticipations of the magnificence of a new world; and if he finds smaller rivers and softer scenery beyond, it strikes him but as a slighter lineament of a more enlarged design. To the great majority of tastes, this, too, is the scenery to live among. The stronger lines of natural beauty affect most tastes; and there are few who would select country residence by beauty at all, who would not sacrifice something to their preference for the neighborhood of sublime scenery. The quiet, the merely rural—a thread of a rivulet instead of a broad river—a small and secluded valley, rather than a wide extent of view, bounded by bold mountains, is the choice of but few. The Hudson, therefore, stands usually

foremost in men's aspirations for escape from the turmoil of cities but, to my taste, though there are none more desirable to see, there are sweeter rivers to live upon.

I made one of a party, very lately, bound upon a rambling excursion up and down some of the river-courses of New York. We had anticipated empty boats, and absence of all the gay company usually found radiating from the city in June, and had made up our minds for once to be contented with the study of inanimate nature. Never were wiseheads more mistaken. Our kind friend, Captain Dean, of the Stevens, stood by his plank when we arrived, doing his best to save the lives of the female portion of the crowd rushing on board; and never, in the most palmy days of the prosperity of our country, have we seen a greater number of people on board a boat, nor a stronger expression of that busy and thriving haste, which is thought to be an exponent of national industry. How those varlets of newsboys contrive to escape in time, or escape at all, from being crushed or carried off; how everybody's baggage gets on board, and everybody's wife and child; how the hawsers are slipped, and the boat got under way, in such a crowd and such a crush, are matters understood, I suppose, by Providence and the captain of the Stevens—but they are beyond the comprehension of the passenger.

Having got out of hearing of "Here's the Star!" "Buy the old Major's paper, sir!" "Here's the Express!" "Buy the New-E*ry!*" "Would *you* like a New-Era, sir?" "Take a Sun, miss?" and a hundred such deafening cries, to which New York has of late years become subject, we drew breath and comparative silence off the green shore of Hoboken, thanking Heaven fo-

even the repose of a steamboat, after the babel of a metropolis. Stillness, like all other things, is relative.

The passage of the Hudson is doomed to be be-written, and we will not again swell its great multitude of describers. Bound onward, we but gave a glance, in passing, to romantic Undercliff and Cro'-Nest, hallowed by the most imaginative poetry our country has yet committed to immortality;* gave our malison to the black smoke of iron-works defacing the green mantle of Nature, and our benison to every dweller on the shore who has painted his fence white, and smoothed his lawn to the river; and, sooner than we used to do by some five or six hours, (ere railroads had supplanted the ploughing and crawling coaches to Schenectady,) we fed our eyes on the slumbering and broad valley of theMohawk.

How startled must be the Naiad of this lovely river to find her willowy form embraced between railroad and canal—one intruder on either side of the bed so sacredly overshaded! Pity but there were a new knight of La Mancha to avenge the hamadryads and water-nymphs of their wrongs from wood-cutters and contractors! Where sleep Pan and vengeful Oread, when a Yankee settler hews me down twenty wood-nymphs of a morning? There lie their bodies, limbless trunks, on the banks of the Mohawk, yet no Dutchman stands sprouting into leaves near by, nor woollen jacket turning into bark, as in the retributive olden time! We are abandoned of these gods of Arcady! They like not the smoke of steam funnels!

Talking of smoke reminds me of ashes. Is there no way of frequenting railroads without the loss of one's eyes? *Must* one

* Drake's "Culprit Fay."

pay for velocity as dearly as Cacus for his oxen? Really, this new invention is a blessing—tc the oculists! Ten thousand small crystals of carbon cutting right and left among the fine vessels and delicate membranes of the eye, and all this amid glorious scenery, where to go bandaged, (as needs must,) is to slight the master-work of Nature! Either run your railroads away from the river-courses, gentlemen contractors, or find some other place than your passengers' eyes to bestow your waste ashes! I have heard of "lies in smiles," but there's a *lye* in tears, that touches the sensibilities more nearly!

There is a drowsy beauty in these German flats that seems strangely profaned by a smoky monster whisking along twenty miles in the hour. The gentle canal-boat was more homogeneous to the scene. The hills lay off from the river in easy and sleepy curves, and the amber Mohawk creeps down over its shallow gravel with a deliberateness altogether and abominably out of tune with the iron rails. Perhaps it is the rails out of tune with the river—but any way there is a discord. I am content to see the Mohawk, canal, and railroad inclusive, but once a year.

We reached the head-waters of the Chenango River, by what Miss Martineau celebrates as an "exclusive extra," in an afternoon's ride from Utica. The latter thrifty and hospitable town was as redolent of red bricks and sunshine as usual; and the streets, to my regret, had grown no narrower. They who laid out the future legislative capital of New York, must have been lovers of winter's wind and summer's sun. They forgot the troubles of the near-sighted; (it requires spectacles to read the signs or see the shops from one side to the other;) they forgot

the perils of old women and children in the wide crossings; they forgot the pleasures of shelter and shade, of neighborly *vis-à-vis*, of *comfortable-lookingness*. I maintain that Utica is *not* a comfortable-looking town. It affects me like the clown in the pantomime, when he sits down without bending his legs—by mere straddling. I would not say anything so ungracious if it were not to suggest a remedy—a *shady mall* up and down the middle! What a beautiful town it would be—like an old-fashioned shirt bosom, with a frill of elms! Your children would walk safely within the rails, and your country neighbors would expose their "sa'ace," and cool their tired oxen in the shade. We felt ourselves compensated for paying nearly double price for our "extra," by the remarkable alacrity with which the coach came to the door after the bargain was concluded, and the politeness with which the "gentleman who made out the way-bill," acceded to our stipulation. He bowed us off, expressed his happiness to serve us, and away we went.

The Chenango, one of the largest tributaries to the Susquehannah, began to show itself, like a small brook, some fifteen or twenty miles from Utica. Its course lay directly south, and the new canal kept along its bank, as deserted, but a thousand times less beautiful in its loneliness, than the river whose rambling curves it seemed made to straighten. We were not in the best humor, for our double-priced "extra" turned out to be the regular stage; and, while we were delivering and waiting for mails, and taking in passengers, the troop of idlers at tavern-doors amused themselves with reading the imaginative production called our "*extr* ! way-bill," as it was transferred, with a sagacious wink, fro[illegible] river's hat to the other. I thought of Paddy's sedan-

chair, with the bottom out. "If it were not for the name of the thing," said he, as he trotted along with a box over his head.

I say we were not in the best of humors with our prompt and polite friend at Utica, but, even through these bilious spectacles, the Chenango was beautiful. Its valley is wide and wild, and the reaches of the capricious stream, through the farms and woods along which it loiters, were among the prettiest effects of water scenery I have ever met. There is a strange loneliness about it; and the small towns which were sprinkled along the hundred miles of its course, seem rather the pioneers into a western wilderness, than settlements so near the great thoroughfare to the lakes. It is a delicious valley to travel through, barring "*corduroy.*" Tre-men-dous! exclaims the traveller, as the coach drops into a pit between two logs, and surges up again—Heaven only knows how. And, as my fellow-passenger remarked, it is a wonder the road does not echo—"*tree-mend-us!*"

Five miles before reaching the Susquehannah, the road began to mend, the hills and valleys assumed the smile of cultivation, and the scenery before us took a bolder and broader outline The Chenango came down full and sunny to her junction, like the bride, who is most lovely when just losing her virgin name, and pouring the wealth of her whole existence into the bosom of another; and untroubled with his new burden, the lordly Susquehannah kept on his majestic way, a type of such vainly-dreaded, but easily-borne responsibilities.

At Binghamton, we turned our course down the Susquehannah. This delicious word, in the Indian tongue, describes its peculiar and constant windings; and I venture to say that on no river in the world are the grand and beautiful in scenery so glori-

ously mixed. The road to Owego follows the course of the valley rather than of the river, but the silver curves are constantly in view; and, from every slight elevation, the majestic windings are seen—like the wanderings of a vein, gleaming through green fringes of trees, and circling the bright islands which occasionally divide their waters. It is a swift river, and singularly living and joyous in its expression.

At Owego there is a remarkable combination of bold scenery and habitable plain. One of those small, bright rivers, which are called "creeks" in this country, comes in with its valley at right angles to the vale and stream of the Susquehannah, forming a star with three rays, or a plain with three radiating valleys, or a city, (in the future, perhaps,) with three magnificent exits and entrances. The angle is a round mountain, some four or five hundred feet in height, which kneels fairly down at the meeting of the two streams, while another round mountain, of an easy acclivity, lifts gracefully from the opposite bank, as if rising from the same act of homage to Nature. Below the town and above it, the mountains, for the first time, give in to the exact shape of the river's short and capricious course; and the plain on which the town stands is enclosed between two ampitheatres of lofty hills, shaped with the regularity and even edge of a coliseum, and resembling the two halves of a leaf-lined vase, struck apart by a twisted wand of silver.

Owego creek* should have a prettier name, for its small vale is the soul and essence of loveliness. A meadow of a mile in

* The author's subsequent residence was upon this stream, about half a mile above its junction with the Susquehannah.

breadth, fertile, soft, and sprinkled with stately trees, furnishes a bed for its swift windings; and, from the edge of this new Tempe, on the southern side, rise three steppes, or natural terraces, over the highest of which the forest rears its head, and looks in upon the meeting of the rivers, while down the sides, terrace by terrace, leap the small streamlets from the mountain-springs, forming each again its own smaller dimple in this loveliest face of Nature.

There are more romantic, wilder places than this in the world, but none on earth more *habitably* beautiful. In these broad valleys, where the grain-fields, and the meadows, and the sunny farms, are walled in by glorious mountain sides -not obtrusively near, yet, by their noble and wondrous outlines, giving a perpetual refreshment, and an hourly-changing feast to the eye—in these valleys, a man's household gods yearn for an altar. Here are mountains that, to look on but once, "become a feeling"—a river at whose grandeur to marvel—and a hundred streamlets to lace about the heart. Here are fertile fields, nodding with grain; "a thousand cattle" grazing on the hills—here is assembled together, in one wondrous centre, a specimen of every most loved lineament of Nature. Here would I have a home! Give me a cottage by one of these shining streamlets—upon one of these terraces, that seem steps to Olympus; and let me ramble over these mountain sides, while my flowers are growing, and my head silvering in tranquil happiness. He whose Penates would not root ineradicably here, has no heart for a home, nor senses for the glory of Nature!

LETTER

TO THE UNKNOWN PURCHASER AND NEXT OCCUPANT OF GLENMARY.*

SIR: In selling you the dew and sunshine ordained to fall, hereafter, on this bright spot of earth—the waters on their way to this sparkling brook—the tints mixed for the flowers of that enamelled meadow, and the songs bidden to be sung in coming summers by the feathery builders in Glenmary, I know not whether to wonder more at the omnipotence of money, or at my own impertinent audacity toward Nature. How you can *buy* the right to exclude, at will, every other creature made in God's image, from sitting by this brook, treading on that carpet of flowers, or lying listening to the birds in the shade of these glorious trees—how I can *sell* it you, is a mystery not understood by the Indian, and dark, I must say, to me.

"Lord of the soil," is a title which conveys your privileges but poorly. You are master of waters flowing, at this moment, perhaps, in a river of Judea, or floating in clouds over some

* Circumstances compelled the author to give up his hopes of seclusion, and return to his profession in the city, after about five years' residence at Glenmary.

spicy island of the tropics, bound hither after many changes. There are lilies and violets ordered for you in millions, acres of sunshine in daily instalments, and dew, nightly, in proportion. There are throats to be tuned with song, and wings to be painted with red and gold, blue and yellow—thousands of them, and all tributaries to you. Your corn is ordered to be sheathed in silk, and lifted high to the sun. Your grain is to be duly bearded and stemmed. There is perfume distilling for your clover, and juices for your grasses and fruits. Ice will be here for your wine, shade for your refreshment at noon, breezes and showers and snow-flakes; all in their season, and all "deeded to you for forty dollars the acre! Gods! what a copyhold of property for a fallen world!"

Mine has been but a short lease of this lovely and well-endowed domain; (the duration of a smile of fortune, five years, scarce longer than a five-act play;) but, as in a play we sometimes live through a life, it seems to me that I have lived a life at Glenmary. Allow me this, and then you must allow me the privilege of those who, at the close of life, leave something behind them: that of writing out my *will*. Though I depart *this* life, I would fain, like others, extend my ghostly hand into the future; and, if wings are to be borrowed or stolen where I go, you may rely on my hovering around and haunting you, in visitations not restricted by cock-crowing.

Trying to look at Glenmary through your eyes, sir, I see, too plainly, that I have not shaped my ways as if expecting a successor in my lifetime. I did not, I am free to own. I thought to have shuffled off my mortal coil tranquilly here; flitting, at last, in company with some troop of my autumn leaves, or some bevy

of spring blossoms, or with snow in the thaw—my tenants at my back, as a landlord may say. I have counted on a life-interest in the trees, trimming them accordingly; and in the squirrels and birds, encouraging them to chatter and build and fear nothing—no guns permitted on the premises. I have had my will of this beautiful stream. I have carved the woods into a shape of my liking. I have propagated the despised sumach and the persecuted hemlock and "pizen laurel." And "no end to the weeds dug up and set out again," as one of my neighbors delivers himself. I have built a bridge over Glenmary brook, which the town looks to have kept up by "the place," and we have plied free ferry over the river, I and my man Tom, till the neighbors, from the daily saving of the two miles round, have got the trick of it. And, betwixt the aforesaid Glenmary brook and a certain muddy and plebeian gutter formerly permitted to join company with, and pollute it, I have procured a divorce at much trouble and pains—a guardian duty entailed of course on my successor.

First of all, sir, let me plead for the old trees of Glenmary! Ah! those friendly old trees! The cottage stands belted in with them—a thousand visible from the door—and with stems and branches worthy of the great valley of the Susquehannah. For how much music, played without thanks, am I indebted to those leaf-organs of changing tones? for how many whisperings of thought breathed like oracles in my ear? for how many new shapes of beauty moulded in the leaves by the wind? for how much companionship, solace, and welcome? Steadfast and constant is the countenance of such friends—God be praised for their staid welcome and sweet fidelity! If I love them better than some things

human, it is no fault of ambitiousness in the trees. They stand where they did. But, in recoiling from mankind, one may find them the next kindliest things; and be glad of dumb friendship. Spare those old trees, gentle sir!

In the smooth walk which encircles the meadow, betwixt that solitary Olympian sugar-maple and the margin of the river, dwells a portly and venerable toad, who, (if I may venture to bequeath you my friends,) must be commended to your kindly consideration. Though a squatter, he was noticed in our first rambles along the stream, five years since, for his ready civility in yielding the way; not hurriedly, however, nor with an obsequiousness unbecoming a republican, but deliberately and just enough; sitting quietly on the grass till our passing by gave him room again on the warm and trodden ground. Punctually, after the April cleansing of the walk, this "jewelled" *habitué*, from his indifferent lodgings hard by, emerges to take his pleasure in the sun; and there, at any hour when a gentleman is likely to be abroad, you may find him, patient on his *os coccygis*, or vaulting to his asylum of high grass. This year, he shows, I am grieved to remark, an ominous obesity, likely to render him obnoxious to the female eye; and, with the trimness of his shape, has departed much of that measured alacrity which first won our regard. He presumes a little on your allowance for old age; and, with this pardonable weakness growing upon him, it seems but right that his position and standing should be tenderly made known to any new-comer on the premises. In the cutting of the next grass, slice me not up my fat friend, sir! nor set your cane down heedlessly in his modest domain. He is "mine ancient," and I would fain do him a good turn with you.

For my spoiled family of squirrels, sir, I crave nothing but immunity from powder and shot. They require coaxing to come on the same side of the tree with you; and, though saucy to me, I observe that they commence acquaintance invariably with a safe mistrust. One or two of them have suffered, it is true, from too hasty a confidence in my greyhound, Maida, but the beauty of that gay fellow was a trap against which Nature had furnished them with no warning instinct! (A fact, sir, which would prettily point a moral!) The large hickory on the edge of the lawn, and the black walnut over the shoulder of the flower-garden, have been, through my dynasty, sanctuaries inviolate for squirrels. I pray you, sir, let them not be "reformed out," under your administration.

Of our feathered connections and friends, we are most bound to a pair of Phebe-birds and a merry bob-o-link—the first occupying the top of the young maple near the door of the cottage, and the latter executing his bravuras upon the clump of alder-bushes in the meadow; though, in common with many a gay-plumaged gallant like himself, his whereabout after dark is a mystery. He comes, every year, from his rice plantation in Florida, to pass the summer at Glenmary. Pray keep him safe from percussion-caps, and let no urchin with a long pole poke down our trusting Phebes; annuals in that same tree for three summers. There are humming-birds, too, whom we have complimented and looked sweet upon, but they can not be identified from morning to morning. And there is a golden oriole who sings, through May, on a dog-wood tree by the brook-side; but he has fought shy of our crumbs and coaxing, and let him go! We are mates for his betters, with all his gold livery! With these

reservations, sir, I commend the birds to your friendship and kind keeping.

And now, sir, I have nothing else to ask, save only your watchfulness over the small nook reserved from this purchase of seclusion and loveliness. In the shady depths of the small glen above you, among the wild flowers and music—the music of the brook babbling over rocky steps—is a spot sacred to love and memory. Keep it inviolate, and as much of the happiness of Glenmary as we can leave behind, stay with you for recompense!

GLENMARY POEMS.

[As other exponents of the influences under which the foregoing portion of the author's writings were penned, perhaps the four following poems, written amid the seclusion of Glenmary, should rather be introduced here than elsewhere in his works.]

THOUGHTS

WHILE MAKING THE GRAVE OF A NEW-BORN CHILD.

Room, gentle flowers! my child would pass to heaven!
Ye look'd not for her yet, with your soft eyes,
Oh, watchful ushers at Death's narrow door!
But lo! while you delay to let her forth,
Angels, beyond, stay for her! One long kiss,
From lips all pale with agony, and tears,
Wrung after anguish had dried up with fire
The eyes that wept them, were the cup of life
Held as a welcome to her. Weep! oh mother!
But not that from this cup of bitterness
A cherub of the sky has turned away.

One look upon thy face ere thou depart!
My daughter! it is soon to let thee go!
My daughter! with thy birth has gush'd a spring
I knew not of—filling my heart with tears,
And turning with strange tenderness to thee—
A love—oh God! it seems so—that must flow

Far as thou fleest, and, 'twixt heaven and me,
Henceforward, be a bright and yearning chain
Drawing me after thee! And so, farewell!
'Tis a harsh world, in which affection knows
No place to treasure up its loved and lost
But the foul grave! Thou, who, so late, wast sleeping
Warm in the close fold of a mother's heart,
Scarce from her breast a single pulse receiving
But it was sent thee with some tender thought,
How can I leave thee—*here!* Alas for man!
The herb in its humility may fall,
And waste into the bright and genial air,
While we—by hands that minister'd in life
Nothing but love to us—are thrust away—
The earth flung in upon our just cold bosoms,
And the warm sunshine trodden out forever!

Yet I have chosen for thy grave, my child,
A bank where I have lain in summer hours,
And thought how little it would seem like death
To sleep amid such loveliness. The brook,
Tripping with laughter down the rocky steps
That lead up to thy bed, would still trip on,
Breaking the dread hush of the mourners gone;
The birds are never silent that build here,
Trying to sing down the more vocal waters;
The slope is beautiful with moss and flowers,
And far below, seen under arching leaves,
Glitters the warm sun on the village spire,

Pointing the living after thee. And this
Seems like a comfort; and, replacing now
The flowers that have made room for thee, I go
To whisper the same peace to her who lies—
Robb'd of her child and lonely. 'Tis the work
Of many a dark hour, and of many a prayer,
To bring the heart back from an infant gone.
Hope must give o'er, and busy fancy blot
The images from all the silent rooms;
And every sight and sound familiar to her
Undo its sweetest link—and so at last
The fountain—that, once struck, must flow forever—
Will hide and waste in silence. When the smile
Steals to her pallid lip again, and Spring
Wakens the buds above thee, we will come,
And, standing by thy music-haunted grave,
Look on each other cheerfully, and say:
A child that we have loved is gone to heaven,
And by this gate of flowers she pass'd away!

THE INVOLUNTARY PRAYER OF HAPPINESS.

I HAVE enough, oh God! My heart, to-night,
Runs over with its fullness of content;
And, as I look out on the fragrant stars,
And from the beauty of the night take in
My priceless portion—yet myself no more
Than in the universe a grain of sand—
I feel His glory who could make a world,
Yet, in the lost depths of the wilderness,
Leave not a flower imperfect!
Rich, though poor!
My low-roofed cottage is, this hour, a heaven
Music is in it—and the song she sings,
That sweet-voic'd wife of mine, arrests the ear
Of my young child, awake upon her knee;
And, with his calm eye on his master's face,
My noble hound lies couchant; and all here—
All in this little home, yet boundless heaven—
Are, in such love as I have power to give,
Blessed to overflowing!

God! who gavest
Into my guiding hand this wanderer,
To lead her through a world whose darkling paths
I tread with steps so faltering—leave not me
To bring her to the gates of heaven, alone!
I feel my feebleness. Let *these* stay on—
The angels who now visit her in dreams!
Bid them be near her pillow till in death
The closed eyes look upon thy face once more!
And let the light and music, which the world
Borrows of heaven, and which her infant sense
Hails with sweet recognition, be, to her,
A voice to call her upward, and a lamp
To lead her steps unto Thee!

A THOUGHT OVER A CRADLE.

I SADDEN when thou smilest to my smile,
Child of my love! I tremble to believe
That, o'er the mirror of that eye of blue,
The shadow of my heart will always pass;
A heart that, from its struggle with the world,
Comes nightly to thy guarded cradle home,
And, careless of the staining dust it brings,
Asks for its idol! Strange, that flowers of earth
Are visited by every air that stirs,
And drink in sweetness only, while the child,
That shuts within its breast a bloom for heaven,
May take a blemish from the breath of love,
And bear the blight forever.
I have wept
With gladness at the gift of this fair child!
My life is bound up in her. But, oh God!
Thou know'st how heavily my heart at times
Bears its sweet burthen; and if thou hast given,

To nurture such as mine, this spotless flower,
To bring it unpolluted unto thee,
Take thou its love, I pray thee! Give it light—
Though, following the sun, it turn from me!—
But, by the chord thus wrung, and by the light
Shining about her, draw me to my child!
And link us close, oh God, when near to heaven!

THE MOTHER TO HER CHILD.

They tell me thou art come from a far world,
Babe of my bosom! that these little arms,
Whose restlessness is like the spread of wings,
Move with the memory of flights scarce o'er—
That through these fringéd lids we see the soul
Steep'd in the blue of its remembered home;
And, while thou sleep'st, come messengers, they say,
Whispering to thee—and 'tis then I see,
Upon thy baby lips, that smile of heaven!
And what is thy far errand, my fair child!
Why away, wandering from a home of bliss,
To find thy way through darkness home again!
Wert thou an untried dweller in the sky?
Is there, betwixt the cherub that thou wert—
The cherub and the angel thou mayst be—
A life's probation in this sadder world?
Art thou, with memory of two things only,
Music and light, left upon earth astray,
And, by the watchers at the gate of heaven,
Looked for with fear and trembling?

Thou, who look'st
Upon my brimming heart this tranquil eve,
Knowest its fullness, as thou dost the dew
Sent to the hidden violet by Thee!
And, as that flower, from its unseen abode,
Sends its sweet breath up duly to the sky,
Changing its gift to incense—so, oh God!
May the sweet drops, that to my humble cup
Find their far way from heaven, send back, in prayer,
Fragrance at thy throne welcome!

OPEN-AIR MUSINGS

IN THE CITY

MUSINGS.

From the window at which I sit, I look directly on the most frequented portion in Broadway—the *sidewalk in front of St. Paul's.* You walk over it every day. Familiarity with most things alters their aspect, however. Let me, after long acquaintance with this bit of sidewalk, sketch how it looks to me at the various hours of the day. I may jot down, also, one or two trifles I have observed while looking into the street in the intervals of writing.

Eight in the morning.—The sidewalk is comparatively deserted. The early clerks have gone by, and the bookkeepers and younger partners not being abroad, the current sets no particular way. A vigorous female exerciser or two may be seen returning from a smart walk to the Battery, and the orange-women are getting their tables ready at the corners. There is to be a funeral in the course of the day in St. Paul's church-yard, and one or two boys are on the coping of the iron fence, watching the grave-digger. Seamstresses and scholmistresses, with veils down, in impenetrable incognito, hurry by with a step which says unmistakeably, "Don't look at me in this dress!" The return omnibuses come from Wall street empty, on a walk.

Nine and after.—A rapid throng of well-dressed men, all walking smartly, and all bound Mammon-ward. Glanced at vaguely, the sidewalk seems like a floor with a swarm of black beetles running races across it. The single pedestrians who are struggling up stream, keep close to the curbstone or get rudely jostled. The omnibuses all stop opposite St. Paul's at this hour, letting out passengers, who invariably start on a trot down Ann street or Fulton. The Museum people are on the top of the building drawing their flags across Broadway and Ann, by pulleys fastened to trees and chimneys. Burgess and Stringer hanging out their literary placards, with a listless deliberation, as if nobody was abroad *yet* who had leisure to read them.

Twelve and after.—Discount-seekers crowding into the Chemical Bank with hats over their eyes. Flower-merchants setting their pots of roses and geraniums along the iron fence. The blind beggar arrived, and set with his back against the church gate by an old woman. And now the streaks, drawn across my side vision by the passers under, glide at a more leisurely pace, and are of gayer hues. The street full of sunshine. Omnibuses going slowly, both ways. Female exclusives gliding to and fro in studiously plain dresses, and with very occupied air—(never in Broadway without "the carriage," *of course*, except to shop.) Strangers sprinkled in couples, exhausting their strength and spirits by promenading before the show hour. The grave dug in St. Paul's, and the grave-digger gone home to dinner. Woman run over at the Fulton crossing. Boys out of school. Tombs' bell ringing fire in the third district.

One and after.—The ornamentals are abroad. A crowd on St.

Paul's sidewalk, watching the accomplished canary-bird, whose cage hangs on the fence. He draws his seed and water up an inclined plane in a rail-car, and does his complicated feeding to the great approbation of his audience. The price is high—his value being in proportion (aristocracy-wise) to his wants! It is the smoothest and broadest sidewalk in Broadway—the frontage of St. Paul's—and the ladies and dandies walk most at their ease just here, loitering a little, perhaps, to glance at the flowers for sale. My window, commanding this *pavé*, is a particularly good place, therefore, to study street habits, and I have noted a trifle or so, that, if not new, may be newly put down. I observe that a very well-dressed woman is noticed by none so much as by the women themselves. This is the week for the first spring dresses, and, to-day, there is a specimen or two of Miss Lawson's April *avatar*, taking its first sun on the promenade. A lady passed, just now, with a charming straw hat and primrose shawl—not a *very* pretty woman, but, dress and all, a fresh and sweet object to look at—like a new-blown cowslip, that stops you in your walk, though it is not a violet. Not a *male* eye observed her, from curb-stone in Vesey to curb-stone in Fulton, but *every woman* turned to look after her! *Query*, is this the notice of envy or admiration; and, if the former, is it desirable or worth the pains and money of toilet? *Query*, again—the men's notice being admiration (not envy) what *will* attract it, and is *that* (whatever it is) worth while? I query what I should, myself, like to know.

Half past three.—The sidewalk is in shade. The orange-man sits on a lemon-box, with his legs and arms all crossed together in his lap, listening to the band who have just commenced playing in the Museum balcony. The principal listeners, who have

stopped for nothing but to listen, are three negro boys, (one sitting on the Croton hydrant, and the other two leaning on his back,) and to them this gratuitous music seems a charming dispensation. (Tune, "Ole Dan Tucker.") The omnibus horses prick up their ears in going under the trumpets, but evidently feel that to show fright would be a luxury beyond their means. Saddle-horse, tied at the bank, breaks bridle and runs away. Three is universal dinner time for *bosses*—(what other word expresses the head men of all trades and professions?)—and probably not a single portly man will pass under my window in this hour.

Four to five.—Sidewalk more crowded. Hotel boarders lounging along with toothpicks. Stout men going down toward Wall street with coats unbuttoned. Hearse stopped at St. Paul's, and the Museum band playing, "Take your time, Miss Lucy," while the mourners are getting out. A gentleman, separated from two ladies by the passing of the coffin across the sidewalk, rejoins them, apparently with some funny remark. Bell tolls. No one in the crowd is interested to inquire the age or sex of the person breaking the current of Broadway to pass to the grave. Hearse drives off on a trot.

Five and after.—Broadway one gay procession. Few ladies accompanied by gentlemen—fewer than in the promenades of any other country. Men in couples and women in couples. Dandies strolling and stealing an occasional look at their loose *demi-saison* pantaloons and gaiter-shoes, newly sported with the sudden advent of warm weather. No private carriage passing, except those bound to the ferries for a drive into the country. The crowd is unlike the morning crowd. There is as much or

more beauty, but the fashionable ladies are not out. You would be puzzled to discover who these lovely women are. Their toilets are unexceptionable, their style is a *very* near approach to *comme il faut.* They look perfectly satisfied with their position and with themselves, and they do—(what fashionable women do *not*)—meet the eye of the promenader with a coquettish confidence he will misinterpret—if he be green or a puppy. Among these ladies are accidents of feature, form, and manner—charms of which the possessor is unconscious—that, if transplanted into a high-bred sphere of society abroad, would be bowed to as the stamp of lovely aristocracy. Possibly—probably, indeed—the very woman who is a marked instance of this, is not called pretty by her friends. She is only spoken to by those whose taste is commonplace and unrefined. She walks Broadway, and has a vague suspicion that the men of fashion look at her more admiringly than could be accounted for by any credit she has for beauty at home. Yet she is not likely to be enlightened as to the secret of it. When tired of her promenade, she disappears by some side-street leading away from the great thoroughfares, and there is no clue to her unless by inquiries that would be properly resented as impertinence. I see at least twenty pass daily under my window, who would be ornaments of any society, yet who, I know, (by the men I see occasionally with them,) are unacknowledgable by the aristocrats up town. What a field for a Columbus! How charming to go on a voyage of discovery and search for these unprized pearls among the unconscious pebbles! How delightful to see these rare plants without hedges about them—exquisite women without fashionable affectations, fashionable hindrances, penalties, exactions, pretensions, and all the wearying nonsenses

that embarrass and stupefy the society of most of our female pretenders to exclusiveness!

Half-past six and after.—The flower-seller loading up his pots into a fragrant wagon-load. Twilight's rosy mist falling into the street. Gas-lamps alight, here and there. The Museum band increased by two instruments, to play more noisily for the night-custom. The magic wheel lit up, and ground rather capriciously by the tired boy inside. The gaudy transparencies one by one illuminated. Great difference now in the paces at which people walk. Business-men bound home, apprentices and shop-boys carrying parcels, ladies belated—are among the hurrying ones. Gentlemen strolling for amusement take it very leisurely, and with a careless gait that is more graceful and becoming than their mien of circumspect daylight. And now thicken the flaunting dresses of the unfortunate outlaws of charity and pity. Some among them (not many) have a remainder of lady-likeness in their gait, as if, but for the need there is to attract attention, they could seem modest—but the most of them are promoted to fine dress from sculleries and low life, and show their shameless vulgarity through silk and feathers. They are not all to be pitied. The gentleman cit passes them by like the rails in St. Paul's fence—wholly unnoticed. If he is vicious, it is not those in the street who could attract him. The "loafers" return their bold looks, and the boys pull their dresses as they go along, and now and then a greenish youth, well-dressed, shows signs of being attracted. Sailors, rowdies, country-people, and strangers who have dined freely, are those whose steps are arrested by them. It is dark now. The omnibuses, that were heavily laden through the twilight, now go more noisily, because lighter. Carriages

make their way toward the Park theatre. My window shows but the two lines of lamps and the glittering shops, and all else vaguely.

I have repeatedly taken five minutes, at a time, to pick out a well-dressed man, and see if he would walk from Fulton street to Vesey without getting a look at his boots. You might safely bet against it. If he is an idle man, and out only for a walk, wo to one he would glance downward to his feet three or four .imes in that distance. Men betray their subterfuges of toilet—women never. Once in the street, women are armed at all points against undesirable observation—men have an ostrich's obtusity, being wholly unconscious even of that battery of critics, a passing omnibus! How many substitutes and secrets of dress a woman carries about her, the angels know!—but she *looks* defiance to suspicion on that subject. Sit in my window, on the contrary, and you can pick out every false shirt-bosom that passes, and every pair of false wristbands, and the dandy's economical half-boots, gaiter-cut trowsers notwithstanding.

Indeed, while it is always difficult, sometimes impossible, to distinguish *female* genuine from the imitation, nothing is easier than to know at sight the "glossed (*male*) worsted from the patrician sarsnet." The "fashion" of women, above a certain guide, can seldom be guessed at in the street, except by the men who are with them.

You should sit in a window like mine, to know how few men *walk* with even passable grace. Nothing so corrupts the gait as

business—(a fact that would be offensive to mention in a purely business country, if it were not that the "unmannerly haste" of parcel-bearing and money-seeking, *may be* laid aside with low-heeled boots and sample cards.) The bent-kneed celerity, learned in dodging clerks and jumping over boxes on sidewalks, betrays its trick in the gait, as the face shows the pucker of calculation and the suavity of sale. I observe that the man used to hurry, relies principally on his heel, and keeps his foot at right angles. The ornamental man drops his toe slightly downward in taking a step, and uses, for elasticity, the spring of his instep. Nature has provided muscles of grace which are only incorporated into the gait by habitually walking with leisure. All women walk with comparative grace who are not cramped with tight shoes, but there are many degrees of gracefulness in women, and oh, what a charm is the highest degree of it! How pleasurable even to see from my window a woman walking like a queen!

The February rehearsal of spring is over—the popular play of April having been well represented by the reigning stars and that pleasant company of players, the Breezes. The drop-curtain has fallen, representing a winter-scene, principally clouds and snow, and the beauties of the dress-circle have retired (from Broadway) discontented only with the beauty of the piece. By-the-way, the acting was so true to Nature, that several trees in Broadway were affected to—budding!

> "Ah, friends, methinks it were a pleasant sphere,
> If, like the trees, *we* budded every year!

If locks grew thick again, and rosy dyes
Returned in cheeks, a raciness in eyes,
And all around us vital to their tips,
The human orchard laughed with rosy lips."

So says Leigh Hunt.

February should be called the *month of hope*, for it is invariably more enjoyable than the first nominal fruition—more spring-like than the first month of Spring. This is a morning that makes the hand open and the fingers spread—a morning that should be consecrated to sacred idleness. I should like to exchange work with any out-of-doors man—even with a driver of an omnibus—specially with the farmer tinkering his fences. Cities are convenient places of refuge from winter and bad weather, but one longs to get out into the country, like a sheep from a shed, with the first warm gleam of sunshine.

March made an expiring effort to give us a spring-day yesterday. The morning dawned mild and bright, and there was a voluptuous contralto in the cries of the milkmen and the sweeps, which satisfied me, before I was out of bed, that there was an arrival of a south wind. The Chinese proverb says, "when thou hast a day to be idle, be idle for a day;" but for that very elusive "time when," I irresistibly substitute the day the wind sweetens, after a sour northeaster. Oh, the luxury (or *curse*, as the case may be) of breakfasting leisurely with an idle day before one!

I strolled up Broadway between nine and ten, and encountered

the *morning tide down;* and if you never have studied the physiognomy of this great thoroughfare in its various fluxes and refluxes, the differences would amuse you. The clerks and workies have passed down an hour before the nine o'clock tide, and the sidewalk is filled at this time with bankers, brokers, and speculators, bound to Wall Street; old merchants and junior partners, bound to Pearl and Water; and lawyers, young and old, bound for Nassau and Pine. Ah, the faces of care! The day's operations are working out in their eyes; their hats are pitched forward at the angle of a stage-coach, with all the load on the driver's seat; their shoulders are raised with the shrug of anxiety; their steps are hurried and short, and mortal face and gait could scarcely express a heavier burden of solicitude than every man seems to bear. They nod to you without a smile, and with a kind of unconscious recognition; and, if you are unaccustomed to walk out at that hour, you might fancy that, if there were not some great public calamity, your friends at least had done smiling on you. Walk as far as Niblo's, stop at the greenhouse there, and breathe an hour in the delicious atmosphere of flowering plants, and then return. There is no longer any particular current in Broadway. Foreigners coming out from the *cafés*, after their late breakfast, and idling up and down, for fresh air; country-people shopping early; ladies going to their dress-makers in close veils and demi-toilets; errand-boys, news-boys, duns, and doctors, make up the throng. Toward twelve o'clock there is a sprinkling of mechanics going to dinner—a merry, short-jacketed, independent-looking troop, glancing gayly at the women as they pass, and disappearing around corners and up alleys, and an hour later Broadway begins to brighten. The omnibuses

go along empty, and at a slow pace, for people would rather walk than ride. The side-streets are tributaries of silks and velvets, flowers and feathers, to the great thoroughfare; and ladies, whose proper mates (judging by the dress alone) should be lords and princes, and dandies, shoppers, and loungers of every description, take crowded possession of the *pavé*. At nine o'clock you look into the troubled faces of men going to their business, and ask yourself "to what end is all this burden of care?" and, at two, you gaze on the universal prodigality of exterior, and wonder what fills the multitude of pockets that pay for it! The faces are beautiful, the shops are thronged, the sidewalks crowded for an hour, and then the full tide turns and sets upward. The most of those who are out at three are bound to the upper part of the city to dine; and the merchants and lawyers, excited by collision and contest above the depression of care, join, smiling, in the throng. The physiognomy of the crowd is at its brightest. Dinner is the smile of the day to most people, and the hour approaches. Whatever has happened in stocks or politics, whoever is dead, whoever ruined, since morning, Broadway is thronged with cheerful faces and good appetites at three! The world will probably dine with pleasure up to the last day—perhaps breakfast with worldly care for the future on doomsday morning! And here I must break off my Daguerreotype of yesterday's idling, for the wind came round easterly and raw at three o'clock, and I was driven in-doors to try industry as an opiate.

The first day of freedom from medical embargo is equivalent, in most men's memories, to a new first impression of existence Dame Nature, like a provident housewife, seems to take the opportunity of a sick man's absence to whitewash and freshen the world he occupies. Certainly, I never saw the bay of New York look so beautiful as on Sunday noon; and you may attribute as much as you please of this impression to the "Claude Lorraine spectacles" of convalescence, and as much more as pleases you to the fact that it was an intoxicating and dissolving day of Spring.

The Battery on Sunday is the Champs Elysées of foreigners. I heard nothing spoken around me but French and German. Wrapped in my cloak, and seated on a bench, I watched the children and the poodle-dogs at their gambols, and it seemed to me as if I were in some public resort over the water. They bring such happiness to a day of idleness—these foreigners—laughing, talking nonsense, totally unconscious of observation, and delighted as much with the passing of a rowboat, or a steamer, as an American with the arrival of his own "argosy" from sea. They are not the better class of foreigners who frequent the Battery on Sunday. They are the newly arrived, the artisans, the German toymakers and the French bootmakers—people who still wear the spacious-hipped trowsers and scant coats, the gold rings in the ears, and the ruffled shirts of the lands of undandyfied poverty. They are there by hundreds. They hang over the railing and look off upon the sea. They sit and smoke on the long benches. They run hither and thither with their children, and behave as they would in their own garden, using and enjoying it just as if it were their own. And an enviable power they have of it!

There had been a heavy fog on the water all the morning, and quite a fleet of the river-craft had drifted with the tide close on to the Battery. The soft south wind was lifting the mist in undulating sweeps, and covering and disclosing the spars and sails with a phantom effect quite melo-dramatic. By two o'clock the breeze was steady and the bay clear, and the horizon was completely concealed with the spread of canvass. The grass in the Battery plots seemed to be growing visibly meantime, and to this animated sea-picture gave a foreground of tender and sparkling green; the trees looked feathery with the opening buds; the children rolled on the grass, and the summer seemed come. Much as Nature loves the country, she opens her green lap first in the cities. The valleys are asleep under the snow, and will be, for weeks.

I am inclined to think it is not peculiar to myself to have a Sabbath taste for the water-side. There is an affinity, felt I think by man and boy, between the stillness of the day and the audible hush of boundaries to water. Premising that it was at first with the turned-up nose of conscious travestie, I have to confess the finding of a Sabbath solitude, to my mind, along the river-side in New-York—the first mile toward Albany on the bank of the Hudson. Indeed, if quiet be the object, the nearer the water the less jostled the walk on Sunday. You would think, to cross the city anywhere from river to river, that there was a general hydrophobia—the entire population crowding to the high ridge of Broadway, and hardly a soul to be seen on either the East

River or the Hudson. But, with a little thoughtful frequenting, those deserted river-sides become contemplative and pleasant rambling-places; and, if some whim of fashion do not make the bank of the Hudson like the Marina of Smyrna, a fashionable resort, I have my Sunday afternoons provided for, during the pigritude of city durance.

Yesterday (Sunday) it blew one of those unfolding west winds, chartered expressly to pull the kinks out of the belated leaves—a breeze it was delightful to set the face to—strong, genial, and inspiriting, and smelling (in New-York) of the snubbed twigs of Hoboken. The Battery looked very delightful, with the grass laying its cheek to the ground, and the trees all astir and trinkling; but on Sunday this lovely resort is full of smokers of bad cigars—unpleasant gentlemen to take the wind of. I turned the corner with a look through the fence, and was in comparative solitude the next moment.

The monarch of our deep water-streams, the gigantic "Massachusetts," lay at her wharf, washed by the waving hands of the waters taking leave of the Hudson. The river ends under the prow—or, as we might say with a poetic license, joins on, at this point, to Stonington—so easy is the transit from wharf to wharf in that magnificent conveyance. From this point up, extends a line of ships, rubbing against the pier the fearless noses that have nudged the poles and the tropics, and been breathed on by spice-islands and icebergs—an array of nobly-built merchantmen, that, with the association of their triumphant and richly-freighted comings and goings, grows upon my eye with a certain majesty. It is a broad street here, of made land, and the sidewalks in front of the new stores are lumbered with pitch and molasses, flour and

red ochre, bales, bags, and barrels, in unsightly confusion—but the wharf-side, with its long line of carved figure-heads, and bowsprits projecting over the street, is an unobstructed walk—on Sundays at least—and more suggestive than many a gallery of marble statues. The vessels that trade to the North Sea harbor here, unloading their hemp and iron; and the superb French packet-ships, with their gilded prows; and, leaning over the gangways and taffrails, the Swedish and Norwegian sailors jabber away their Sunday's idle time; and the negro-cooks lie and look into the puddles; and, altogether, it is a strangely-mixed picture—Power reposing, and Fret and Business gone from the six-days' whip and chain. I sat down on a short hawser-post, and conjured the spirits of ships around me. They were as communicative as would naturally be expected in a *tête-à-tête* when quite at leisure. Things they had seen and got wind of in the Indian seas, strange fishes that had tried the metal of their copper bottoms, porpoises they had run over asleep, wrecks and skeletons they had thrown a shadow across when under prosperous headway—these and particulars of the fortunes they had brought home, and the passengers coming to look through one more country to find happiness, and the terrors and dangers, heart-aches and dreams, that had come and gone with each bill of lading—the talkative old bowsprits told me all. I sat and watched the sun setting between two outlandish-looking vessels, and, at twilight, turned to go home, leaving the spars and lines drawn in clear tracery, on a sky as rosy and fading as a poet's prospects at seventeen.

We know nothing of a more restless tendency than a fine, old-fashioned June day—one that begins with a morning damp with a fresh south wind, and gradually clears away in a thin white mist, till the sun shines through at last, genial and luxurious, but not sultry, and everything looks clear and bright in the transparent atmosphere. We know nothing which so seduces the very eye and spirit of a man, and stirs in him that gipsy longing, which, spite of warning and punishment, made him a truant in his boyhood. There is an expansive rarity in the air of such a day—a something that lifts up the lungs, and plays in the nostrils with a delicious sensation of freshness and elasticity. The close room grows sadly dull under it. The half-open blind, with its tempting glimpse of the sky, and branch of idle leaves flickering in the sun, has a strange witchery. The poor pursuits of this drossy world grow passing insignificant; and the scrawled and blotted manuscripts of an editor's table—pleasant anodyne as they are when the wind is in the east—are, at these seasons, but the "Diary of an Ennuyée"—the notched calendar of confinement and unrest. The commendatory sentence stands half-completed; the fate of the author under review, with his two volumes, is altogether of less importance than five minutes of the life of that tame pigeon that sits on the eaves washing his white breast in the spout; and the public good-will, and the cause of literature, and our own precarious livelihood, all fade into dim shadow, and leave us listening dreamily to the creeping of the sweet south upon the vine, or the far-off rattle of the hourly, with its freight of happy bowlers and gentlemen of suburban idleness.

What is it to us when the sun is shining, and the winds bland and balmy, and the moist roads with their fresh smell of earth

tempting us away to the hills—what is it, then, to us, whether a poor-devil-author has a flaw in his style, or our own leading article a "local habitation and a name?" Are we to thrust down our heart like a reptile into its cage, and close our shutter to the cheerful light, and our ear to all sounds of out-door happiness? Are we to smother our uneasy impulses, and chain ourselves down to a poor, dry thought, that has neither light, nor music, nor any spell in it, save the poor necessity of occupation? Shall we forget the turn in the green lane where we are wont to loiter in our drive, and the cool claret of our friend at the Hermitage, and the glorious golden summer sunset in which we bowl away to the city—musing and refreshed? Alas—yes! the heart *must* be closed, and the green lane and the friend that is happier than we (for he is idle) *must* be forgotten, and the dry thought *must* be dragged up like a willful steer and yoked to its fellow, and the magnificent sunset, with all its glorious dreams and forgetful happiness, *must* be seen in the pauses of articles, and the "bleared een" of painful attention—and all this in June—prodigal June—when the very worm is all day out in the sun, and the birds scarce stop their singing from the gray light to the dewfall!

What an insufferable state of the thermometer! We knock under to Heraclitus, that fire is the first principle of all things. Fahrenheit at one hundred degrees in the shade! Our curtain in the attic unstirred! Our japonica drooping its great white flowers lower and lower. It is a fair scene, indeed! not a ripple from the pier to the castle, and the surface of the water as Shelley says, "like a plane of glass spread out between two heavens'

--and there is a solitary sloop, with the light and shade flickering on its loose sail, positively hung in the air—and a gull, it is refreshing to see him, keeping down with his white wings close to the water, as if to meet his own snowy and perfect shadow. Was ever such intense, unmitigated sunshine? There is nothing on the hard, opaque sky, but a mere rag of a cloud, like a handkerchief on a tablet of blue marble, and the edge of the shadow of that tall chimney is as definite as a hair; and the young elm that leans over the fence is copied in perfect and motionless leaves, like a very painting on the broad sidewalk. How delightful the night will be after such a deluge of light! How beautiful the modest rays of the starlight, and the cool dark blue of the heavens will seem after the dazzling clearness of this sultry noon! It reminds one of that exquisite passage in Thalaba, where the spirit-bird comes, when his eyes are blinded with the intense brightness of the snow, and spreads her green wings before him!

There is no struggling against it—*we have a need* to pass the summer in some place that God made. We have argued the instinct down—every morning since May-day—while shaving. It is as cool in the city as in the country, we believe. We see as many trees, from our window, (living opposite St. Paul's churchyard,) and as much grass, as we could take in at a glance. The air we breathe, outside the embrasures of Castle Garden, every afternoon, and on board the Hoboken and Jersey boats, every warm evening, are entire recompenses to the lungs for the day's dust and stony heat. And then God intends that *somebody* shall live in the city in summer-time, and why not we? By the time

this argument is over, our chin and our rebellious spirit are both smoothed down. Breakfast is ready—as cool fruit, as delicious butter under the ice, and as beloved a *vis-à-vis* over the white cloth and coffee-tray as we should have in the country. We go to work after breakfast with passable content. The city cries, and the city wheels, the clang of the charcoal cart and the importunities of printer's imp—all blend in the passages of our outer ear as unconsciously and fitly as brook-noises and breeze-doings. We are well enough till two. An hour to dinner—somewhat a weary hour, we must say, with a subdued longing for some earth to walk upon. Dinner—pretty well! Discontent and sorrow dwell in a man's throat, and go abroad while it is watered and swept. The hour after dinner has its little resignation also—coffee, music, and the "angel-visit" from the nursery. Five o'clock comes round, and with it Nature's demand for a pair of horses. (Alas! why are we not centaurs, to have a pair of horses when we marry?) We get into an omnibus, and as we get toward the porcelain end of the city, our porcelain friends pass us in their carriages, bound out where the earth breathes and the grass grows. An irresistible discontent overwhelms us! The paved hand of the city spreads out beneath us, holding down the grass and shutting off the salutary earth-pores, and we pine for balm and moisture! The overworked mind offers no asylum of thought. It is the out-door time of day. Nature calls us to her bared bosom, and there is a floor of impenetrable stone between us and her! At the end of the omnibus-line we turn and go back, and resume our paved and walled-up existence; and all the logic of philosophy, aided by ice-creams and bands of music, would fail to convince us, that night, that we are not victims and wretches For Heaven's sake,

some kind old man, give us an acre off the pavement, and money enough to go and lie on the outside of it, of summer afternoons!

We had a June May, and a May June, and the brick world of Manhattan has not, as yet, become too hot to hold us. This is to be our first experiment at passing the entire summer in the city, and we had laid up a few alleviations which have as yet kept the shelf, with our white hat, uncalled for by any great rise in the thermometer. There is no knowing, however, when we shall hear from Texas and the warm "girdle round the earth," (the equator—no reference to English dominion,) and our advice to the stayers in town may be called for by a south wind before it is fairly printed. First—*our substitute for a private yacht* Not having twenty thousand dollars to defray our aquatic tendencies—having, on the contrary, an occasional spare shilling—we take our moonlight trip on the river—dividing the cool breezes, 'twixt shore and shore—*in the Jersey ferry-boat.* Smile those who have private yachts! We know no pleasanter trip, after the dusk of the evening, than to stroll down to the ferry, haul a bench to the bow of the ferry-boat, and "open up" the evening breeze for two miles and back, for a shilling! After eight o'clock, there are, on an average, ten people in the boat, and you have the cool shoulder under the railing, as nearly as possible, to yourself. The long line of lamps on either shore makes a gold flounce to the "starry skirt of heaven"—the air is as pure as the rich man has it in his grounds, and all the money in the world could not mend the outside of your head, as far as the horizon. (And

the horizon, at such a place and hour, becomes a substitute for the small hoop you have stepped out of.) No man is richer than we, or could be better off—till we reach the Jersey shore—and we are as rich going back. Try this of a hot evening, all who prefer coolness and have a mind that is good company.

Then, there is our *substitute for an airing.* There is a succession of coaches, lined with red velvet, that, in the slope of the afternoon, ply, nearly empty, the whole length of Broadway—two or three miles, at an easy pace, for sixpence. We have had vehicles, or friends who had vehicles, in most times and places that we remember, and we *crave* our ride after dinner. We need to get away from walls and ceiling stuck over with cares and brain-work, and to be amused without effort—particularly without the effort of walking or talking. So—

"Taking our hat in our hand, *that* remarkably requisite practice"—

we step out from our side-street to the brink of Broadway, and *presto,* like magic, up drives an empty coach with two horses, red velvet lining, and windows open; and, by an adroit slackening of the tendons of his left leg, the driver opens the door to us. With the leisurely pace suited to the hour and its *besoin,* our carriage rolls up Broadway, giving us a sliding panorama of such charms as are peculiar to the afternoon of the great thoroughfare, (quite the best part of the day, for a spectator merely.) Every bonnet we see wipes off a care from our mental slate, and every nudge to our curiosity shoves up our spirits a peg. Easily and uncrowded, we are set down for our sixpence at "Fourteenth street," and turning our face once more toward Texas, we take the next velvet-lined vehicle bound down. The main difference betwixt us

and the rich man, for that hour, is, that he rides in a green lane, and we in Broadway—he sees green leaves, and we pretty women—he pays much and we pay little. The question of *envy*, therefore, depends upon which of these categories you honestly prefer. While Providence furnishes the spare shilling, *we*, at any rate, will not complain. Such of our friends as are prepared to condole with us for our summer among the bricks, will please credit us with the two foregoing alleviations.

There is nothing for which the similitudes of poetry seem to us so false and poor, as for affliction by the death of those we love. The news of such a calamity is not "a blow." It is not like "a thunderbolt," or "a piercing arrow;" it does not "crush and overwhelm" us. We hear it, at first, with a kind of mournful incredulity, and the second feeling is, perhaps, a wonder at ourselves—that we are so little moved. The pulse beats on as tranquilly—the momentary tear dries from the eye. We go on, about the errand in which we were interrupted. We eat, sleep, at our usual time, and are nourished and refreshed; and if a friend meet us and provoke a smile, we easily and forgetfully smile. Nature does not seem to be conscious of the event, or she does not recognize it as a calamity.

But little of what is taken away by death is taken from the happiness of one hour, or one day. We live, absent from beloved relatives, without pain. Days pass without our seeing them—months—years. They would be no more absent in body

if they were dead. But suddenly, in the midst of our common occupations, we hear that they are one remove farther from us—in the grave. The mind acknowledges it true. The imagination makes a brief and painful visit to the scene of the last agony, the death-chamber, the burial—and returns, weary and dispirited, to repose. For that hour, perhaps, we should not have thought of the departed if they were living—nor for the next. The routine we had relied upon to fill up those hours comes round. We give it our cheerful attention. The beloved dead are displaced from our memory, and perhaps we start suddenly, with a kind of reproachful surprise, that we can have been so forgetful—that the world, with its wheels of minutes and trifles, can thus untroubled go round, and that dear friend gone from it.

But the day glides on, and night comes. We lie down, and unconsciously, as we turn upon our pillow, commence a recapitulation that was once a habit of prayer—silently naming over the friends whom we should commend to God—did we pray—as those most dear to us. Suddenly the heart stops—the breath hushes—the tears spring hot to the eyelids. *We miss the dead!* From that chain of sweet thoughts a link is broken; and, for the first time, we feel that we are bereaved. It was in the casket of that last hour before sleeping—embalmed in the tranquillity of that hour's unnamed and unreckoned happiness—that the memory of the dead lay hid. For that friend, now, we can no longer pray! Among the living—among our blessings—among our hopes—that sweet friend is nameable no more! We realize it now. The list of those who love us—whom we love—is made briefer. With face turned upon our pillow—with anguish and

fears—we blot out the beloved name, and begin the slow and nightly task of unlearning the oft-told syllables from our lips.

And this is the slow-opening gate by which sorrow enters in! We wake on the morrow, and remember our tears of the past night; and, as the cheerful sunshine streams in at our window, we think of the kind face and embracing arms, the soft eyes and beloved lips, lying dark and cold, in a place—oh, how pitiless in its coldness and darkness! We choke with a suffused sob, we heave the heavy thought from our bosom with a painful sigh, and hasten abroad—for relief in forgetfulness!

But we had not anticipated that this dear friend would die, and we have marked out years to come with hopes in which the dead was to have been a sharer. Thoughts, and promises, and meetings, and gifts, and pleasures, of which hers was the brighter half, are wound like a wreath of flowers around the chain of the future, and, as we come to them—to the places where these looked-for flowers lie in ashes upon the inevitable link—oh, God! with what agonizing vividness they suddenly return!—with what grief, made intenser by realizing, made more aching by prolonged absence, we call up those features beloved, and remember where they lie, uncaressed and unvisited! Years must pass—and other affections must "sweep, and garnish, and enter in" to the void chambers of the heart—and consolation and natural forgetfulness must do their slow work of erasure—and, meantime, grief visits us, in unexpected times and places, its paroxysms imperceptibly lessening in poignancy and tenacity, but life, in its main current, flowing, from the death to the forgetting of it, unchanged on!

And now, what is like to this, in Nature, (for even the slight sympathy in dumb similitudes is sweet?) It is not like the rose's perishing—for that robs only the hour in which it dies. It were more like the removal from earth of that whole race of flowers, for we should not miss the first day's roses, hardly the first season's, and should mourn most when the impoverished Spring came once more round without them. It were like stilling the music of a brook forever, or making all singing-birds dumb, or hushing the wind-murmur in the trees, or drawing out from Nature any one of her threads of priceless repetition. We should not mourn for the first day's silence in the brook, or in the trees—nor for the first morning's hush after the birds were made voiceless. The *recurrent* dawns, or twilights, or summer noons, robbed of their accustomed music, would bring the sense of its loss—the value of what was taken away increasing with its recurrent season. But these are weak similitudes—as they must needs be, drawn from a world in which death—the lot alike of all living creatures that inhabit it—is only a calamity to man!

EVANESCENT IMPRESSIONS.

I have very often, in the fine passages of society—such as occur sometimes in the end of an evening, or when a dinner-party has dwindled to an unbroken circle of choice and congenial spirits, or at any of those times when conversation, stripped of all reserve or check, is poured out in the glowing and unfettered enthusiasm to which convivial excitement alone gives the confidence necessary to its flow—I have often wished, at such times. that the voice

and manner of the chance and fleeting eloquence about us could be arrested and written down for others besides ourselves to see and admire. In a chance conversation at a party, in the bagatelle rattle of a dance, in a gay hour over coffee and sandwiches *en famille,* wherever you meet those whom you love or value, there will occur pieces of dialogue, *jeux d'esprit,* passages of feeling or fun—trifles, it is true, but still such trifles as make eras in the calendar of happiness—which you would give the world to rescue from their ephemeral destiny. They are, perhaps, the soundings of a spirit too deep for ordinary life to fathom, or the gracefulness of a fancy linked with too feminine a nature to bear the eye of the world, or the melting of a frost of reserve from the diffident genius—they are traces of that which is fleeting, or struck out like phosphorus from the sea by irregular chance—and you want something quicker and rarer than formal description to arrest it warm and natural, and detain it in its place till it can be looked upon.

INVALID RAMBLES

IN GERMANY,

IN THE SUMMER OF 1845.

INVALID RAMBLES.

I.

With my brother, who has been some years resident in Germany, I started one beautiful autumnal afternoon, on a visit to the Leipsic Cemetery. On our way we met a mourning-carriage, with an arrangement that was new to me, and I was at a loss whether to think it touching or droll. The hearse, and the carriage for the principal mourners, were combined in *one vehicle*—the head of the corpse, that is to say, lying in the carriage on the fore-seat and its feet extending out under the driver. It was like a coach with a long black box projecting lengthwise under the driver's feet. In the novelty, probably, lay all that produced an irreverent feeling; as nearness to the dead, up to the last moment, must be desirable to the mourner accompanying the body to the grave.

The German funeral customs are, in many respects, different from those of other countries. As we walked through the cemetery, I saw various things which struck me as curious, some of them agreeable to the mind and some revolting. I was pleased, among other things, with a pretty substitute for the "born" and "died" of common inscriptions upon tombstones—an *upright* torch over the date of the birth, and an *inverted* torch over the

date of the death. The new-made graves were singularly ornamented. In addition to bouquets of flowers, which, by themselves, seem a very natural tribute, muslin scarfs, with gold and silver fringes, were laced across the sod, and sliced lemons laid in among the flowers. The tops of most of the new-made graves resembled the ornaments for a *diner sur l'herbe;* and as these tributes apparently are not removed for months, the decayed fruit and flowers, and the soiled lace, upon the less recent mounds, seemed to me rather to express neglect than attention. Most of the graves in the open church-yard, (the "*God's acre,*" as the Germans strongly call it,) have palings around them, and an invariable wooden seat and gravel-walk within. These arrangements for walking around, and sitting with, the dead, are so inconveniently small that I presumed they were figurative, and might as well have been carved upon the tombstone; but they are kept in order, the year round, for fees paid to the sexton; and, once a year, (on St. John's day,) it is the custom at Leipsic for relatives to meet and *pass the day with their dead,* covering the graves with fresh flowers, and eating, drinking, and smoking there together. With the lower classes, this day of revisiting and recalling the memory of the dead, is turned into a picknick frolic.

The upper classes bury their dead in a kind of open cottage, each family having a separate one, and these small buildings standing in regular rows around squares, like a rural village. They resemble neat suburban residences, only that the door is of wire-work, and the centre of the floor is never closed over the vault. As you look in, you see a pretty room hung with evergreen wreaths and decorated with the names of the dead, written and framed, and hanging, like pictures, on the walls. The en-

deavor seems to have been to remove the look of repulsive imprisonment of the dead.

In the newer part of the cemetery, I observed that handsome enclosures were the prevailing taste, with a wall at the back, in which was set a marble tablet for the inscriptions. One of these was an indication of a plant much more carefully cultivated in Germany than with us—(*friendship*)—and ran thus: "*Resting-place of the family Plato and their friend Dolz.*" In the centre of another tablet, inscribed "Family Schmidt," was a sculptured Death's head with a lizard and snake creeping from the holes of the skull—a sort of horrible defiance of the general spirit of this poetical cemetery which must have come from an obstinate bad man. Two inscriptions which I saw here delighted me. One was, "*Res. lightly, good daughter!*"—an epitaph of beautiful simplicity. The other is the perfection of poetical brevity and elegance, and was engraved on a small and humble stone: "*Un ange de plus au ciel.*"

The church of St. John stands at the entrance of this cemetery, and the many streets and squares, extending far off in the rear, offer a cheerful rather than a gloomy promenade to the public. There is another cemetery, I was told, in the neighborhood of Leipsic, in a secluded place called St. John's Valley, to which great numbers of the lower classes resort for the frolicksome keeping of the sepulchral anniversary.

I observed that the German grave-digger has an expressive addition to his tools—a *ladder*—to insure his return. On inquiring as to the meaning of the sliced lemons upon the graves, I was told that, as anti-corruptive, the fruit was symbolical; and that the poor commonly bury the dead with the chin propped with a lemon, as there is an opinion very common, that, at a certain

stage of corruption, the body trembles, and the jaw wags, if unsupported.

II.

Teaching the deaf and dumb to *hear with the eye*, and teaching them to know how to speak by *seeing and feeling words when spoken*, are triumphs of inventive benevolence, of which the patient and good Germans should have as enthusiastic credit, as was given to Howe for the lighting of the windowless cell in which was locked up the mind of Laura Bridgman. Under the guidance of a friend of Horace Mann's, (Dr. Vogel,) my brother and I joined Dr. Bartlett, of Philadelphia, in a visit to the school where this difficult tuition is practiced. We were shown at once into one of the school-rooms, where, while waiting for the principal, we saw a teacher employed in the initiatory lesson. Ten or fifteen deaf and dumb boys sat at a long table, with slates and pencils; and the master, seated at the upper end, had one pupil standing at his knee, whom he was instructing, while the others looked on. As he pronounced the letters of the alphabet, the boy *imitated the motion of his lips, and thereby made the same sound*—aiding his imitation of it by placing his hand on the master's breast and *feeling the vibration*, and then trying the vibration of his own. The other boys, meantime, wrote on their slates the letters they *saw* spoken—waiting their turn for experiment with the master.

It is curious, to one who has never before thought of it, what a different gate the mouth is, to the different comers-out—how differently it lets out A from B, C from D. These teachers of the deaf and dumb find no difficulty in making the exit of every let-

ter of the alphabet distinctly recognizable by *the eye only*. The boys at this table were beginners, but they already knew their letters thus *by sight, when spoken.* The little fellow who was up for his lesson was a complete personification of Shakspeare's Puck—a rosy, laughing, untroubled urchin, whom it was almost a pity to help out of his locked-up self into a less happy world—digging into a pure spring to let in upon it a muddy river—and his imitation-utterances of the letters were very discordant and unnatural, as would be expected from a deaf and dumb beginner. The entrance of the principal of the school interrupted our acquaintance with him, and we followed into another apartment, to see the upper class, not without a pressure of my hand on the head of my little favorite, and a smile of intelligence magnetically quick in return. At a table in this same room, by the way, the son of an Austrian nobleman was pointed out to us among the new scholars—a straight, well-limbed lad of fourteen, who, by his melancholy countenance, seemed to have been made more fully aware than the other boys of the extent of their common calamity.

The upper class numbered some eight or ten lads, who were being taught to hear and speak *by a deaf and dumb tutor.* (By *hear*, I mean, of course, *understand what is said.*) This tutor was a perfected pupil of the Institution, and a sufficient proof of the practicability of the system. He was born deaf and dumb, but he *conversed freely!* He was a young man of twenty-five, very intelligent-looking, and differed from other people only in the intense expression of *searchingness* in his countenance—a gaze as if he was trying to look through you into another man—natural enough when you reflect that he converses habitually with

people by only *seeing* them talk. Not understanding the language, I could not, of course, judge of the correctness of his accentuation, but he answered the questions put to him with great readiness, only with a little more guttural effort and more twisting of the lips than other people. He found no difficulty in understanding what my brother said to him—though Americans, even in speaking German, move their mouths much less than Germans. In this national immobility of the external organs of speech, indeed, lies a formidable obstacle to the success of this system, either in England or America. We do our talking *inside the mouth,* slighting all the angular sounds to which the honest German lips do such visible justice. It was odd, by the way, to see my brother endeavoring to make the tutor hear a question when his back was turned—the latter perfectly unaware that he was spoken to, though he had heard all that was said to him *before.*

The experiments with the class were exceedingly interesting. To see a once deaf and dumb man *talking* to deaf and dumb boys, who afterwards wrote with chalk upon the wall what *we* had *heard* and *they* had *seen* him say, was a scene that had in it elements for the sublime. It seemed to me, indeed, somewhat as clairvoyance does—like venturously forcing a door that God has pointedly shut. I speak only of my impression at the time. I looked along the bench, however, to see if I could detect, among the youthful heads, an embryal Moloch, religious, political, or moral, whose senses it had been thus necessary to lock from action on the world. None, there, looked to me as if he had in him the stuff for dangerous greatness.

I regret exceedingly that the name of the benevolent inventor

of this system has slipped from my memory. His physiognomy is marked for a philanthropist, and he looks at home in the school, to which he has devoted his life. I think he said it had been in operation fifteen years, but mention is made of it in one of the well-known Reports of Horace Mann, to which I refer those who wish for more particular information. One shade I must put in, with the light of the picture, and I do it solely in the hope of calling the attention of the worthy principal to the subject, since I could not name it without apparent intrusion through an interpreter, and—"*scripta verba manent.*" I refer to the *want of personal cleanliness* in the pupils, and a closeness of air in the school-rooms that was really offensive. The majority of the boys, and *all* the masters, were evidently suffering for fresh air—pale and unhealthy, as well as neglectful of their persons. This (as every one knows who has travelled here) is *a Germanism*, and the country needs, as an avatar to the progress of education, *a missionary to preach ventilation.* To destroy a boy's health while supplying him with intelligence to enjoy life, is like the Indian's lengthening his blanket—adding to the bottom a piece cut from the top.

The system of *hearing with the eye* gives a valuable hint to those who are merely deaf, but, as an unsuspected accomplishment, it would make dangerous havoc among secrets. Fancy a man in the pit of a theatre who could *overhear with an opera-glass* every body whom he could *see* talking. How many interviews between Napoleon and the statesmen of Europe are described in memoirs, where the writer speaks of seeing the countenances and gesticulations of the talkers, yet only guesses at the drift of the conversation! How judges, conferring in whispers

on the bench, diplomatists at court, speculators on 'change, bet-ters at play, lovers out of ear-shot, might insensibly reveal secrets to one of those eye-listeners! Metternich would find employ for a man with such an accomplishment.

III.

We went, on Sunday morning, to hear the *motett*—a kind of chaunt performed by the choir of boys who are educating in music at the Leipsic Conservatory. This performance opens the morning service of the Lutheran Church, at eight o'clock, and, even at that early hour, it draws a fashionable amateur audience of University students, strangers, and citizens. They are sometimes accompanied by a full orchestra, and, to this assimilation with theatricals, even the most "evangelical," in this music-loving nation, do not object. The *motett* would not be called music, however, by uneducated ears. It opened with what sounded like a general scream of forty or fifty boys at the tops of their voices. They went on with what seemed a musical scramble, or race, moderating a little towards the close, where a most thrilling effect was produced by a sudden pause, and an echo sent back from the other end of the church, by voices hidden behind the altar. In this class of compositions, each part overlaps the other, like scale-armor, and it takes very industrious listening not to have one's comprehension of the harmony outran. The *boy-soprano* is considered a great musical luxury. As in the *miserere* at Rome, it is very much run after, in the *motett*, by the epicures in harmony. Its intense purity has certainly an effect leaning towards the supernatural, though Nature, by giving a quality of

voice that departs with the innocence of youth, seems to have dedicated boys to church worship—the voice itself, while it lasts, expressing the purity proper to the choristers of the temple.

Germany is the inner tabernacle of harmony, and the science of music is studied here with a philosophic depth that makes of it an intellectual profession. In America, the public at large makes little distinction between great composers and great players —all who are devoted to music, being, in common parlance, "musicians." But there is almost as much difference between composing harmony and playing it, as between making a horse and driving it. Lizst, Vieuxtemps, De Meyer, and other great players, it need hardly be said, are men of very different profession from Beethoven, Mozart, and Meyerbeer. Eminence in both composing and playing is sometimes united in one man—as in Wallace, who is a successful author of operas and waltzes, and, at the same time, a great pianist and violinist. So, in the drama, Sheridan Knowles is both dramatist and actor. But, simple difference as this appears, it is a fact that, even in England, the two are superficially confused; and it is in Germany alone that the musical *composer* is of a recognized intellectual profession. The process of musical composition, indeed, is a matter of very difficult study, and it requires years of application to acquire that familiarity with the laws of harmony which is necessary to compose understandingly. There is no profession, perhaps, which requires so complete abstraction of mind; and a composer of acknowledged genius holds, in Germany, the mingled estimation of scholar and poet. He is very certain to be an enthusiast in his art, for even poets and scholars are better paid for their toils. It is probably part of the reason why Germany has become the

fountain of music, that, in addition to the proper estimation in which its gifted followers are held, there are benefices, of some emolument and more honor, conferred on the most distinguished by the continental sovereigns, and there are situations of some profit connected with church music, with operas, and musical instruction in most of the capitals. Mendelssohn, for example, is the "chapel-master" to the King of Saxony—a very desirable salaried appointment.

In our comparatively new country, we are too busy, as yet, with the *expressible*, to appreciate the higher meanings of music, which Beethoven called "the language of the inexpressible." But, as a refiner and chastener to the public taste, as an innocent absorbent of popular leisure, and as an easy current of enthusiasm, on which may be embarked a great deal of instruction, patriotism, and religious feeling, a general taste for the simpler forms of music is a national object, worthy of present and thoughtful attention. The wealthy and refined in our country, as in all others, will command operas, and the best players and singers from abroad; but, like the exotics in green-houses, these expensive importations bring but little of the soil in which they sprung, and produce nothing for "the many." We want *American* music to give natural fragrance to *American* feeling, enthusiasm and religion. As a momentum to patriotism, and a chain to link together the feeling of an army, there is nothing like a national air, as is abundantly shown in the history of Swiss and German enthusiasm; but, war aside, national music is the true nurse for love of home and love of country, and in a general taste for music lies one of the greatest levers which can be brought to bear on religion and devotional feeling. The hymns and chorals of Luther

are recorded by church historians as all-powerful in advancing the cause of the Reformation, and a saying is recorded of one of the cardinals—"By his songs he has conquered us." A striking instance is given of the effect of one of these compositions. During the struggle between Popery and Protestantism, whilst mass was celebrating at the Cathedral at Lubec, and the people were preparing to leave the church, two boys began to sing a choral of Luther's which had just become generally known, entitled, "O God of heaven, look to it!" The congregation remained and joined in the singing of it, as though it had been given out from the pulpit, and *the next day the Roman Catholic clergy left the city*, and Protestantism was established.

The "conservatory" that I have mentioned above, is a school, connected with the Church of St. Thomas, at Leipsic, where boys are sent who show a decided natural talent for music. This branch of education has long been considered, in Germany, very important, and it has lately been taken up in England by the Committee of the Privy Council for Education. *A singing-school for schoolmasters* was established in Exeter Hall, a year or two ago, under the direction of this committee. The object was professedly "to make *congregational singing* a part of popular education," so that every one could join harmoniously in this effective portion of divine service. Not long since, the importance of this powerful element of education was agitated among the professors of Yale College, and (I may, perhaps, mention here, without indelicacy) it was the impulse of this movement which determined my brother, just then graduating at Yale, to follow his strong natural bent, and substitute the cultivation of music for a learned

profession. He is now at Leipsic, completing his fourth year of study of musical composition.

Among the statues most honored at Leipsic—standing in the public promenade—is that of Sebastian Bach, who, in his time, was one of the boys in the choir of the Church of St. Thomas. He was afterwards director of the choir. His name as a musical composer stands high in Germany—his oratorios and chorals being considered models of grandeur and magnificence. He was a first-rate performer on the organ, as well as a composer.

I may add, to the foregoing mention of the importance attached to musical education, that the church music of Russia, which has always been celebrated, is owing to the care bestowed on it by the government. A *vocal academy* has existed there for *several centuries*—established in the reign of Wladimir the Great. It is maintained by the State, and means are liberally provided for the improvement of the students in every branch of musical science. Madame Catalini was once present at a chorus sung by the pupils of this school, and is said to have exclaimed in tears—"*My* songs are but of this world, but that which I have just heard is a chorus of angels."

We heard a *motett*, on another Sunday, in the Church of St. Nicholas, considered the handsomest Lutheran church in Germany. It is thought, by architectural critics, to be overloaded with ornament, but it is certainly a magnificent structure. It was here, by the way, that I first became aware of a very sensible German custom—that of *concentrating the coughing and nose-blowing* during service-time. The clergyman stops at different

periods of his discourse, steps back from his pulpit-stand, and *blows his nose*—the entire congregation imitating his example, and disturbing the service with the operation *at no other time.* This Church of St. Nicholas is famous for another arrangement peculiar to itself. The wealthy citizens of the town have *private boxes,* with private entrances from the street, so that their coming and going, and their stay in the church, are free from all observation. The *motett* which we heard at this church, even to my own uneducated ear, was thrillingly beautiful, and I thought, then, that no preparative of the proper mood for divine service could be more effective. Such music *must* stir the tears of the listener, and the door for devotional utterance is then open, if ever.

IV.

In the very centre of Leipsic stands the old building, under which is the famous AUERBACH'S CELLAR, celebrated by Gœthe's having laid a scene of his Faust there, and by the more tangible association that it was a frequent place of carousal for Gœthe himself—(educated, you remember, at the University of Leipsic.) Knowing the fact that an immortal poet *had been seen* there as a boy, and had drunk beer there without passing for more than any other customer, we went in—prepared, of course, to be sharper-eyed than his contemporaries, and, while we were there, at least, to let no immortal sit unrecognized at the beer-tables. Auerbach's is a two-story cellar, the counting-house on the left hand of the floor nearest above ground, and the vaulted drinking room on the right. On a table at the foot of the entrance-stairs, stood sealed bottles of different wines and liquors, (making rather

the show of a Bininger's than a Windust's,) but, dropping our heads to go under the arch of the heavy pillars which sustain the old building, we stood in a low vault, with very dim daylight around us. The walls were well rubbed, shoulder-blade high, and the yellow wash of the arched ceiling was dull with smoke. The tables had the much-wiped complexion common to cellars, but we looked in vain for the gimlet-holes out of which Mephistophiles supplied the drunken students with wine, and the person who came forward to know our wants, though "his coat it was black," (and, to our surprise, he seemed rather a gentleman "in his Sunday's best" than a waiter,) answered in no other particular to the portrait of the fiend of Dr. Faustus. On the contrary, he could offer to conjure us up nothing better to eat than a herring—for we were hungry with strolling through the Fair, and wanted something with our beer.

We sat down with our mugs before us, and loosed our imaginations. The furniture of the cellar was evidently unchanged, and I doubt if the ceiling had been more than cobweb'd, except with the head of an occasional tall man, since Gœthe's time. Two persons only were present, besides ourselves; but, prepared as we were to recognize a poet in either of them, we were compelled to admit that they ate their herrings and drank their beer without any symptom of an unshed chrysalis. Having studiously avoided learning any German since I have been in the country, (thinking that a language, like a razor, is worse than none, unless you can use it with a very fine edge,) I went on for a little while, fancying that the gutturals I overheard might possibly have a smack of inspiration; but my brother, to whom the language now is rather more familiar than English, dissolved even

that illusion by a translation of his overhearings. They were traders, talking of goods—topics *infra dig.* for Mephistophiles or his poets. With a look at all the stools, to make sure that we had seen one that had been honored with the avoirdupois of the poet, we paid for our drink and its salt provocative, and "left the presence."

Just around the corner from Auerbach's, is the square in which the Allied Sovereigns and their Generals met, on the day after Napoleon's first certain toppling to his downfall—the day after the crisis-battle of Leipsic. One of the buildings in this square, the Konigshaus, was the Emperor's head-quarters before the battle, and it was in this house that Schwartzenburg, the General who commanded against him in this eventful conflict, died—seven years after. Overwhelming as is the interest of such a spot, with all the mighty shadows which haunt the historic memory of the visitor, it would have been more interesting, far, to me, to have seen the tent in which Napoleon fell asleep on the battle-field, without the walls, with his Marshals around him—in the hour, beyond doubt, when Hope finally left him—a scene which is, to me, one of the most affecting in all history, and one of the grandest subjects for painting or poetry. It will perhaps give value to the little I can say of my walk over the battle-field of Leipsic, to refer to a passage or two from the history of this memorable struggle—passages descriptive of a most thrilling crisis in the fate of Europe, and the picture of which will bear recalling, even by those most familiar with the remembrance. As the reader will recollect, the Powers in the North had combined in a desperate and unanimous uprising to throw off the oppression of French conquest, and, by a succession of reverses, the hitherto indomita-

ble eagles of Napoleon had been driven from the Elbe to the Elster. The English had sent gold, the Prussian women had given their jewels and ornaments, the Emperor Alexander was present with his army, the King of Prussia with his, Bernadotte with his Swedes, and the Saxons deserting by thousands from Napoleon, though their King remained true to him. Austria, too, had just broken her alliance with him, and Bavaria was ready to cut off his retreat to France, should he be defeated. The French army was worn out and dispirited by unceasing and losing conflicts, and though, wherever the Emperor appeared in person, victory was sure, his Marshals had been defeated so repeatedly, that the army was discouraged. At Leipsic the grand rally was made for a decided struggle, however, and the Allies came up for the "Volkerschlact," or Battle of the Nations, as the Germans now call it, with the tremendous force of 230,000 soldiers! Bonaparte's army numbered 136,000. It was the longest, sternest and bloodiest of the battles of Europe, and one of the largest in the history of the world.

A merry company of German peasants, returning from the Fair, and going out towards their homes by the bridge over the Elster, walked just before us on the way to the battle-field, and their laugh was in our ears when we stopped, over the stream, to look into its quiet waters and know it for the scene of this eventful history. The Elster here is deep, but narrow—perhaps twenty feet across—and, with its smooth current and grassy banks, looked like anything but the centre of one of the bloodiest spots on earth. A pretty cottage, trellised and surrounded by a neat garden, stands just on the outer side of the bridge, and several cannon-balls, which struck it during the battle, are

now sticking in its walls, painted over with the bricks in which they are half imbedded. The battle-field extends from the bridge in an open and level plain, carefully cultivated but unfenced, and the sole occupants of the ground on which was fought the Battle of Nations—the field on which lay at one time over a hundred thousand dead and dying—was a *single laborer*, ploughing, with a horse and cow harnessed together! I should mention, perhaps, a flock of crows who followed in the newly turned furrow, picking up worms that had in them, no doubt, the blood of heroes.

Just on the left of the bridge, on the inner side of the Elster, toward the town, is a beautiful garden in which is cultivated (for sale) the memory of Poniatowski. Six silver groschen are charged for entrance. Opposite the spot where the brave Pole was drowned, is a small temple in which is shown his saddle and pistols, his autograph, a bust of him, several engraved likenesses, and the bones of the horse drowned under him. In another part of the garden is a small monument erected by his comrades on the spot where his body was found, *four days* after the battle. He had been thrice wounded during the day, and was probably exhausted when he reached the river, or his failure in an attempt to cross so narrow a stream would scarce seem credible. He was mounted upon a chance horse, however, his own having been killed under him, and the channel was choked up with the struggling multitude driven into it after the destruction of the bridge. The little memoir, hung on the wall near his relics, states that he was entreated to give up his command after he was wounded, and retire from the field, and his reply is the last word recorded of Poniatowski:—"The honor of the Poles has been

entrusted to me, and I will give it up only to my God!" How strangely irresistible and thrilling is the admiration we bestow upon this kind of heroism? Yet it is easier than a great many other things men do, who are not thought much of.

My pen leaves the battle-ground of Leipsic with great reluctance; and, on re-reading, I have destroyed a couple of pages into which the interest of the spot inveigled me—for, though a visit to the scenes of great events stirs enthusiasm that is fresh in itself, the *record of the enthusiasm* must be but a repetition of what has been often said and thought before. It is easier to write about a pyramid than a pebble, (as the author of Proverbial Philosophy would say,) and, in travelling over a country so thickly sown with exciting history and localities, it requires some forbearance to leave untouched the prominent, because hacknied, topics, and confine one's self to trifles that have been overlooked.

V.

The Fair (of Leipsic) has its suburbs, and our daily stroll commenced with the fruit market, open at this particular season for the winter supplies. We lodged immediately in the rear of this acre of apple women, and the fragrance we met on coming out of doors, was like the smell of the forbidden tree, so cleverly described by Satan to Eve—

> "A savory odor blown,
> Grateful to appetite, more pleased my sense
> Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
> Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even."

The fruit, of many very fine varieties, was heaped up in bins, boarded in, by each owner, between four poles, and on the tops of the poles stood gayly-colored baskets of fruit and flowers, the sales-woman sitting below on a low stool, up to her knees in pears and apples. As you walk through the fragrant apple lane, you are assailed with the most complimentary invitations to stop and spend a *groschen*, and (like Satan) we generally yielded—Germany being a country of charming independence as to the where and how of eating. At night a large cloth is thrown over the fruit on the ground, and, as the market is on the open suburb, with not even a covered booth to protect it, I wondered, passing it late and seeing no one on the watch, at the confidence it implied in the popular honesty. A moonlight night, however, chanced to reveal the secret. It will not be in this generation that a Yankee farmer and his wife will be content to take apples to town and *sleep three weeks in the barrels*—but so do the Germans at Leipsic! I was standing, in a clear, cool autumn twilight, after a walk, watching the full moon and setting sun on the opposite edges of the horizon, when, happening to look around, I observed one of my pretty acquaintances in the apple-market putting on a night-cap. Presuming to draw a little nearer, I saw that she stood by a barrel, laid on its side, with straw in the hollow, and she presently crept into this, leaving her feet out of doors under a blanket. I walked up and down for half an hour, and saw that every one of the twenty or thirty families in the market disposed of themselves for the night in the same way. There were several couples among them who occupied the same barrel, (of the size of a Long Wharf sugar hogshead,) the husband smoking his pipe outside while the wife "settled her-

self," and creeping in very gingerly a few minutes after. With two or three hundred wild students mousing about for fun, one would suppose that these were hardly safe dormitories, but the apple merchants seemed to have no fear of being molested.

A little farther around, upon the outside of the promenade which encircles the town, we came to the cluster of theatrical and show-booths, which, with the booths for refreshment, form a small village especially devoted to merry-making. Here was a circus, and at the door a fat Turk, in pink silk jacket and white trowsers and turban, offering tickets to the passers-by. A long succession of attractions followed—a dwarf and an Albino, a menagerie, a wonderful athlete, a fortune-teller, an exhibitor of pictures, a children's railroad, and several marvellous monsters, each separate show with its separate band of music, and its canvassers in splendid costume screaming at the door. Away in the rear of the show-booths extended the lanes of refreshment-shops, each shop having its two or three female musicians playing industriously, and between every two doors sat a blind or lame man grinding an organ and singing at the top of his voice. In no part of this noisy village of fun could one hear less than four or five different musics at once, but every soul seemed gay, and the discords probably had the effect of adding somewhat to the general mirthfulness. I was struck with one novelty here in the way of bookselling. A man stood before a sort of a drop-curtain covered with pictures, each picture representing a scene from one of the pamphlets on his table. With a long pole he pointed to these pictorial advertisements, one after another; and, as he told the story in a loud voice, a remarkably pretty girl handed round for sale, among the crowd, the particular book which it illustrated.

This was literally "books and stationary," (the books for sale and the pictures stationary,) and, as it seemed to "do," I made a note of it for the benefit of the Reform Booksellers.

Between this and the entrance to the town, there were still several booth-villages—one for the sale of boots and shoes only, another for cheap millinery, a third for wooden ware, and a large one for the winter clothing of the poorer classes. The German custom which I before alluded to, (in my letter from Frankfort,) of wearing knit clothes, so wadded with cotton that they are like beds to walk about in, is here ministered to with great ingenuity. Fuel is so scarce and dear in this country, and the peasantry so much poorer than any laboring classes with us, that they are compelled to find some substitute for more fire than suffices to cook by, and they fairly *wad* out the winter accordingly. Wadded leggings and wadded jackets, adapted to the wear of both sexes, are sold in great quantities—the encasement for one woman costing about two dollars. It would pay to import these articles into our northern States, for a suit of them would be as good as a winter's fuel to give to a poor woman, and they would be excellent under-clothes for winter travelling and sleigh-riding.

The town begins on this side with a gay *café*, and here you enter at once upon the crowded Fair. A new sign sticks out from every apartment of the buildings on either side, giving the name of a stranger merchant and the city he comes from—though to find leisure to read signs, you must get the shelter of a corner, for the crowd, all day long, is like two opposing tides, and it takes all your attention to avoid elbowing and collision. As you proceed, you find the street divided into two by a double line of booths placed back to back, each one of about the size of a pri-

vate box in a theatre. These little three-sided shanties (for they have no fronts) are made of boards that hook together, and, between Fair and Fair, they are removed and stowed away. They are the property of the town, and are let to the traders for three weeks. The people who occupy booths, mostly live in them, having about as spacious accommodations as the apple women in their barrels; though how they get in, or sit down, or stretch themselves to sleep, are mysteries I was not lucky enough to unravel. It would be another mystery how these pretty sales-women keep warm, (for there they stand all day, in full toilette, selling to customers who are exercising in their cloaks,) but that one knows what wadded envelopings are for sale in the neighborhood. Most of them speak French, and (industry, accomplishments, privations and all) they seem wives or daughters of most profitable exemplariness.

The rambles among the booths in the squares are the most amusing, because the lanes are as narrow as a church aisle, and you pass between two rows of little shops with the goods on either side within reach of your arm—meanwhile, moreover, running a gauntlet of persuasions to purchase. Some particular article is usually recommended to you as you pass, and it is generally chosen with skillful reference to your appearance. As the German women do their year's shopping at Fair time, and come to Leipsic at this season from all the country around, (*to have their gadding and money-spending in one holiday lump,*) you can imagine why the scene is untiringly gay for two or three weeks, and why there is little difference in the crowd from breakfast to twilight. The great values exchanged at the Fair are, of course, managed by samples and in warehouses out of sight, but there is

a retail, apparently of every article on earth, carried on out of doors at the same time, and no museum could be more interesting than this strange aggregation, at one time and place, of supplies for the wants of all climates and customs. Everything is here. All that you could find in the Strand of London, in the Bezestein of Constantinople, in the Bazaars of Persia, in the windows of Maiden Lane, in the porticoes of the tropics, in the studios of Italy, in the tents of Hudson's Bay, or in the shops of Paris or Pekin, is laid out on these open counters in an array of "*parlous*" temptation! One should put his money into the hands of an "assignee" before he takes a walk in the Fair of Leipsic.

The feature that strikes the stranger more particularly, is the large proportion of *pipe shops*—one-half the trade of the Fair, at least, seeming to lie in this single article of merchandise. The variety of shape and embellishment is very great, as it may well be, in this proper pipe-land, where there is no luxury which takes precedence of smoking—the wealthy German having frequently his room hung round with scores of expensive pipes, and his servant devoted exclusively to the care of them. The pictures, beautifully enamelled upon the bowls of the pipes, are addressed, of course, to the tastes of the buyers, and the great majority are of a voluptuous character; but it is a common tribute to the popular idols in history, politics or religion, to carry their portraits on the pipe, and just now the head of Rongé, the Reformer, is the prevailing favorite. As every man in the land makes an inseparable companion of his pipe, and, as the avenues to celebrity are very few in a country where there is no freedom of the press, this kind of pipe-immortality is much valued.

The great preponderance, in the Fair, of articles for gifts, shows

the well-known affectionateness in the German character—their habits of endearing themselves to friends and relatives by making presents, creating an immense traffick in trifles purely ornamental. This beautiful trait seems to extend to the lowest classes, and it is very curious to see the numberless varieties of little gaudy "*fairings*" and keepsakes which are adapted to the limited means of the poor. Among other keepsakes, I observed that there was a large sale of *garters with poetry inscribed on them.* They were elastic and painted to imitate wreaths of roses. I bought a pair for sixpence with a verse upon each, of which the following exhortation to industry and love is a literal translation:—

While night with morning lingers,
  Awake and stirring be,
And with your pretty fingers
  Clasp this about your knee.
When day with eve reposes
  And stars begin to see,
Unclasp this band of roses,
  And, dearest, think of me!

This is poetry where we are not in the habit of looking for it, but, to the taste of the humble and virtuous, not misplaced. *Honi soit qui mal y pense,* as says the classic moral of the garter.

The articles for sale throughout the Fair would make a long catalogue, of course, and I wish only to speak of such as are peculiar to the country. A kind of *in-doors overshoe,* made of felt, half an inch thick, is a clumsy comfort, exclusively German, I believe, and sold here in great quantities. I have already explained that the economical classes *wear* their fuel, (in cotton wadding,) and that the whole population *wear* their sidewalks (in

heavy boots.) Each individual, in doors, *wears* his carpet in the same way, in a pair of these felt shoes. The German houses have wooden floors and staircases, neatly waxed, but no carpets, except a small rug to step out of bed upon, and the German doctors say that the fine dust, continually sent up from a carpet, is very injurious to the lungs. The Germans (*apropos*) are also *their own fences*, the whole country being unenclosed, and the cows being sent out to graze with children and women to walk round them all day long. As a plastic cosmopolite, one does in Germany as Germans do—that is to say, wears his fire-place, and his sidewalk and carpet—but one becomes, by the transfer, as inelegant as the Germans proverbially are; and, for one, I prefer a country where flag-stones, fuel and Kidderminster are not parts of a walking gentleman. I presume also that the wives and daughters of American farmers would as lief not do duty as fences—centuries older than ours as is the civilization of the country where it is done.

Another German feature of the Fair is the innumerable variety of conveniences for carrying cigars and tobacco—the cigar-cases and tobacco-pouches being, now, of all degrees of ingenuity, elegance and expensiveness. The *degree of resource* that smoking is, to the Germans of all ages and classes, is wonderful, most of them having the pipe in the mouth literally three-fourths of the time, and flying to it from all kinds of annoyance and restlessness. What excitements it takes the place of—what, in our country, correspondently absorbs enthusiasm and quiets the nerves—would be a curious matter of speculation. I should not be surprised if tobacco stood the Germans instead of newspaper virulence and highly-spiced politics—instead of the getting up of sham en-

thusiasms and the gladiatorship of private character—excitements which are wanting in Germany. There *may be* a "file for the viper" in the favorite weed of Captain Bobadil.

VI.

The costumes seen at Leipsic, during the Fair, follow the luxuriance of the city architecture. In my daily rambles through the crowded labyrinths of the booths, I became familiarized with several that, at first, struck me as exceedingly novel. Among these were some of the Jewish merchants, who, below the eyes, were all beard and bombazine—their long black robes sweeping the ground, and their beards down to their girdles—yet who, withal, *wore fashionable hats!* You can fancy how Shylock would look, on the stage, in a modern beaver! There were, perhaps, twenty or thirty of these Polish Jews, with whose noses and beards (for we could hardly say we saw their faces) we became acquainted by meeting them daily. It is odd, by the way, how much it retards and embarrasses one's judgment of a man to have his mouth concealed by a full beard; and one wonders, after a little studying of the unshaved, that men are willing, (since Providence has furnished them with a natural mask,) to walk this unsafe world with such a tell-tale of the character, as the mouth, uncovered. I tried in vain to make up my mind as to whether these Hebrews were refined or coarse, good-tempered or bad, spirited or dogged—points which you decide at a glance when you see the mouth; but, though their hats and long robes together gave them a ludicrous appearance, they were, otherwise, mere automaton-like figures, moving about without expression,

and seemed, to me, only to differ from each other like bales of goods of different length and bulk. It needs some symptoms of a white shirt, moreover, to relieve the *bruin*-look of an animal as black and hairy as these spectacles of beard and bombazine; and, whether it is from seeing caricatures of the devil hiding his cloven foot in a priest's long gown, or from some other reason, a man scarce looks honest, to my eye at least, without some show of his locomotives.

On the whole, as you see, I thought these plump Israelites dressed very unbecomingly, though, perhaps, as to economy and self-command, very *Jew*-diciously.

I need not describe, of course, the well-known customs of the Turks, Greeks, and Armenians, whose bright colors were sprinkled showily over the crowd. The Tyrolese dress, too, is familiar, through prints and ballet-dancers—the tall hat, like an inverted morning glory, tied with a gold tassel, the laced boot and the short petticoat of green cloth. The men and girls, of this class of the Leipsic traders, are principally pedlers of gloves, watch-guards, suspenders, garters, etc., and they go about with a box of their wares slung over the shoulder, offering them to passers-by with proverbial attractiveness of manner. I saw no Tyrolese whose countenance did not seem to me a fine and honest one, and, with one or two of them, by little purchases and constant meeting in the booths and coffee gardens, my brother and I became somewhat acquainted.

There were various different costumes worn by the peasants from the different mountain regions of Germany, only one of which was entirely new to me. This was a female dress, which slightly altered the geography of modesty—most carefully con-

cealing the chin, and yet with the petticoat shortened up to the knee. The head-dress was of black silk, and set upon the back of the head with a high frame; but with a curtain which formed a sort of close bag, tightly drawn to the hollow of the under lip, and thence falling below, over the throat and shoulders, and tucked into the bodice. The best specimen of this costume that we saw was a most carefully-dressed girl of eighteen or twenty, who followed a lady about the Fair, probably her servant. We met them for several days, and watched the girl closely, to discover whether her chin was ever released from its black-silk imprisonment. She managed it like a point of propriety, however, carrying her head like a boy with a stiff shirt-collar, and never turning it without turning the whole body; though, how a peasant could submit to the constraint of such a fashion, we were puzzled to understand. She, and the others who were dressed like her, wore blue woollen stockings, and showed the mountaineer shapeliness of limb. I could not discover from what part of highland Germany these chin-shamed damsels came. It occurs to me, while remembering their head-dress, by the way, that it exactly does the office of a man's full beard, (in concealing the chin and throat,) and the fashion may have had its origin in an attempt by the other sex to imitate the covering of Nature which we, with soap and razor, displace so perseveringly. The Turkish costume, you remember, however, expresses a natural modesty of chin—the men concealing it by the beard, and the women most guardedly by the folds of the yashmac. The subject is open to the researches of the learned!

My jotting-book has one memorandum more on the subject of head-dresses. Attracted by a most picturesque-looking dame

behind the counter, we entered a refreshment booth, one afternoon, in the quarter of the Fair devoted to shows and theatricals. A gaudy sign outside set forth that the occupants were Dutch, and sold drinks from Amsterdam. Three female minstrels were playing on their harps and singing, in a recess half hidden by a curtain, and two very modest maidens came forward to receive our orders. The old woman and her two waiting-maids wore a kind of cap which I must describe for the benefit of such ladies as have the misfortune to be secretly middle-aged. In outline, then, this pretty disguiser of age was something like a lace helmet. It was made of embroidered lace, and completely covered the forehead to the eyebrows, fitting closely to the beautiful curves of the head, and only raised sufficiently on the back to accommodate the unseen knot of hair. Under the cap was visible a sort of gold corset, which came forward in two embracing clasps to the temples, and held the edge of the cap tightly over the crow's-feet corner of the eyes. The lace edging, with this restraint, descended along the cheek and fell off like relaxed wings over the shoulders, exceedingly embellishing even the young girls, whose hair, foreheads and temples it completely concealed. This is a very common cap, I was told, among the peasants of Holland, but a more becoming one I never saw, for either old or young; and certainly, as a disguiser of delinquent hair and other blemished neighborhoods, it is worth claiming and copying from our Dutch ancestors. Some people think it trifling, in those who are no longer young, to be particular in dress; but it seems to me, on the contrary, that it is a debt which woman more especially owes to the general sense of beauty. It is a pity they *must* grow less lovely without, as they grow more lovely

within—pity that the soul embellishes always at the expense of the body; but, since the ravages of the exterior, which feeling and experience plunder so mercilessly, *can* be concealed with beautiful fabrics, should not the art of disguising age, (*ut mos est mulieribus,*) be encouraged rather than ridiculed? Thus moralized we, at least, over the tepid "schnapps," which we called for as an excuse for a half-hour's seat in the booth of the Amsterdammers.

There is a class of Hungarian peasants who frequent the Fair, and whose dress, though principally made up of tatters, is remarkably picturesque. Their limbs and bodies are literally covered with loose rags tied on with twine; but they wear a dirty, slouched hat, and a short, dirty cloak, with a grace that is truly singular. They all seem to follow the same vocation, peddlers of mouse-traps and other little articles made of wire; but the ten or fifteen who were strolling about Leipsic were all youths of marked natural beauty; and, in truth, they looked to me more like gentlemen in disguise than the beggars they partly were. These common Hungarians have rather a gipsyish look—their brown eyes, and straight black locks, betraying the oriental blood that has crept up the Danube; and the expression of their faces, too, has the stamp of that indomitable wildness that fled from the proselytism of Timour Beg. Their hats, cloaks, and skins are all of one color, a kind of smoked-brown, that would tell admirably in a picture. And I wonder, *apropos*, that artists do not make a yearly pilgrimage to Leipsic, where they might copy from life, in one month, figures of greater variety and picturesqueness, than could be met with in years of travel.

The *students* add not a little to the variety of the costume of

Leipsic. The University is the most expensive and fashionable one of Germany, and the sons of the wealthier classes and the young nobility are usually educated here. Another university, that of Halle, being within a short ride by railroad, and Leipsic being the nearest large town, the bloods of that "cradle of knowledge" are here in great numbers during the Fair. These German students are quite the most luxuriant specimens of juvenescence that I have yet met; and, indeed, one who has only seen youth under the restraint of other countries, looks at them as an English gardener, who had never seen a grape-vine except as it was trimmed of its superfluous growth to bear fruit, would look at a wild grape-vine smothering trees in the American woods. The despotic governments of the continent have made the discovery that a man's brain must let off, sooner or later, a certain quantity of the gas of insubordination; and, by encouraging the opening of the bluster-valves during college life, they find that the stuff for patriotism works pretty well off while the beard is growing, leaving the graduating scholars with a surfeit of vaporing, ready to shave and become orderly subjects. License, incredible, except with this accounting for, is granted to the German students, and they drink, strut, dress oddly, fight duels and talk treason, with an irresponsibility of fling that would enchant the wild boys of Mississippi. Most of them have a scar across the cheek, and wear a broad ribbon over the breast, marked with the number of their sword encounters—these battles being only perilous to nose and cheek, from the way in which they are padded up for action; but, altogether—strut, wound and ribbon—they are the most Alsatian and galliard-looking of juveniles, particularly in their more showy suits of toggery. Their necessary

practice in fencing developes the chest very finely, and they usually carry their clothes with a good air; but it was droll to see upon what shocking bad boots they were willing to wear very long spurs, and how unsuspicious was their coxcombry, with terrible shortcomings of their wearing in the coats and trowsers they had designed. Here and there was a magnificent fellow, however, and I picked out eight or ten among the scores I saw daily at the Fair and at the coffee-gardens, whose companionship seemed very attractive, if one were an idle ornamental. A very popular dress seemed to be a sort of horseman's uniform. It consisted of wash-leather tights, with boots up to the thigh; a short, collarless, sky-blue frock, worked all over with black braid, and buttoned up to the throat, a loose girth of heavy cord slung over from shoulder to hip, a heavy whip in hand, and spurs as long as a toasting-fork. With a little cap like the top of a mustard-pot, and *moustache a la sign-post*—the dress was that of a very striking-looking customer. Long hair is very much the fashion among them, and they almost invariably wear the shirt-collar in the style of spread bread-and-butter. They seem to think it looks fierce to show the Adam's apple. No two of them, however, were dressed alike, and, to a man who wishes to see bold experiments in coats, trowsers, and moustaches, Leipsic would be an interesting field of observation.

I have omitted to mention, by the way, a class whose exterior struck me more than any that I have described—I mean a class of *mere keepers-warm*—whose corresponding stratum of human nature I never saw in any other country. There were, perhaps, a half dozen of them, creeping about the Fair. They were not beggars, though they seemed to have no vocation except to walk

about with their heads shrunk under, as if with a tendency to be beasts. I tried in vain to catch the eye of one of them, or to find any one who could make a guess of what they were. Skins, with the fur turned inwards, and matted with filth, as if they slept on the ground and never even shook themselves in rising, were their only covering, except strong shoes. Even the fur caps on their heads were tangled with their hair, beard, and eyebrows, and evidently were never taken off; and, by the look of what skin was visible about the eyes, and other unerring symptoms, it was quite evident that they never shaved, washed, combed, or undressed. They were the first human beings I ever saw, who, being sane, healthy, and not beggars, were utterly without thought of their appearance. People who had more the look of men "surnamed Iscariot" could scarcely be conceived.

VII.

After having passed a month with my brother at Leipsic, I took advantage of a day, that looked like the beginning of the Indian Summer, to plead for a vacation from crotchets and quavers, and a flying visit to Dresden. I had been a lodger, during my stay, in the same house with my brother—a boarding-house kept by the widow of a professor; and, as its only fault was the profusion of things to eat and the time it took to eat them, (two hours for every meal,) I may be recording useful information by mentioning the amount of my bill. As I had made no bargain, nor inquiry, as to the charges, and had given more than usual trouble—breakfasting and taking tea in my own room, and ordering coffee at all hours—I expected a long bill. And so it was—

every lump of sugar recorded, and a most circumstantial statement of my havings—the sum total, however, for thirty one days, amounting to about *fifteen* American dollars!

The railroad from Leipsic to Dresden runs a gauntlet of ghosts, for it passes over fields that have been the great arena of the battles of Europe; scarce a rood of the seventy miles, probably, that has not drunk the blood of the victims of "glory." As there are no fences, and this part of Germany is almost a dead level, it looks like one broad prairie, specked here and there with females laboring in the fields, or sheep watched while they graze, by a family of women and children. It strikes an American oddly to see no farm-houses, no barns, and no cottages. He wonders where the laborers live who cultivate so carefully this vast garden. And it seems most repugnant to our idea of the charm of rural life, to arrive, every five or ten miles, at a little, pent-up, crowded, wretched village—like a cancer cut from the noisome heart of a city—and find that here live, in propinquity economical for their masters, the laborers whose toils extend for miles around, and who have a day's work in getting to and from the scenes of their labor, besides the evil of constant absence from home and certain exposure to unfavorable weather. It is, perhaps, partly a result of these customs, so hostile to a *home*, that the women of the agricultural class in Germany are on a level with beasts of burthen—doing all the drudgery of field-labor, while their husbands loiter with their pipes about the beer haunts of the town, acting rather like farm-overseers, while the females of the family are farm-laborers.

You see, every where, groups of women doing men's work in the fields, and seldom a man employed, except in driving a horse,

or in some of the more agreeable kinds of farm labor. Public opinion in America would make any rural neighborhood "too hot to hold" a man, who should degrade his "women-folk" to the condition of females in the agricultural class of Germany.

In any weather better than an equinoctial storm, I should have felt a poetical compunction at crossing, for the first time, as famous a river as the Elbe, at the skipping speed of a rail-train. Its banks looked wintry and unattractive, however, and the tall castle of Meissen, (once a monarch's residence, and now a manufactory of porcelain,) looked drearily worthy of its latter destiny. The fourteen miles hence to Dresden, give the eye a most welcome relief from the flat country of which it has become weary. The grouped hills along the shores of the Elbe are bright with villas and with the sparkle of decorative culture, and, from a short distance, Dresden looks more Italian than German. It was easy to see, even at this season, that it must be, in summer, the most lovely of halting-places for the traveller. With some trouble in holding on to our hats and cloaks, we scrambled from the terminus to the hotel, taking our first impression of the world's great china-shop, in a gale of wind thoroughly raw and uncomfortable. On the way, I called my brother's attention to the small market-carts, which were invariably drawn by women and dogs, or women and a donkey, harnessed together. The women had broad girths over the breast and back, and drew with all their might, as did the dogs—the donkey alone requiring whip or encouragement. The three animals were apparently on a complete level of treatment and valuation.

Our carpet-bags set down on the bare floor of a large bleak bed-room in a German hotel, with not a fire accessible in the

house, and three shivering hours to dinner—weather raw, rainy and wretched—we welcomed ourselves, as we best could, to the enchanting capital of—

"Sachsen,
Wo die schonen madchen wachsen."*

But for the memory of a delightful friend, who had resided in Dresden, and had embroidered her reminiscences of it on conversation which I treasured—but for these spirit footprints around me—I should have handed over, to condign forgetfulness, my first morning in the "Florence of Germany." Looking into each other's blue faces for counsel, my brother and I concluded to make a rush through the rain in search of the gallery and its famous *Madonna del Sisto*, though, in a less extreme case, I would have carefully avoided the injustice to Raphael, of bringing so congealed a heart to receive a first impression of his picture.

We had chanced upon the Hotel de Wein, in the new town, and were on the wrong side of the Elbe for convenience in sight-seeing. Our way to the old town lay over one of the most costly bridges of Europe, (built by the sale of dispensations from the Pope for eating eggs and butter during Lent,) and, as a bridge built upon eggs and butter, I was not surprised to find one of its arches carried away by the flood. There were tremendous freshets in Germany last spring, of which you remember the accounts, and this arch, (not the one that was blown up to cover the retreat of Desaix) gave way to the pressure. There is a temporary platform across, and they are at work repairing it, the men at the

* ———Saxony,
Where the pretty maidens grow.

pumps singing day and night most uproariously. What with the hurricane on the bridge and the blustering chorus under it, it was more like an access to the dominions of King Eolus than to the city which Mrs. Jameson calls "the fine lady of Germany."

The entrance to the town, from the river side, is through a sort of long cave, which runs through the King's palace, and under his suite of state apartments—compelling his majestic ears to hear, better than any one of his subjects, the rumble of every hackney-coach that is stirring. Why the principal thoroughfare of the town should thus pass under the King's roof, or, rather, why he should live in this boarding-house looking building, instead of the neighboring Zwinger Palace, or the Japanese Palace on the other side of the river, I was not sufficiently acquainted with his grand chamberlain to inquire—but I ventured to wonder. This residence of the King is siamesed to the Catholic church in the square, by an ill-looking covered gallery extending across the alley between, so that he walks over his subjects' heads, both in going to dinner and going to church. The latter is rather symbolical, as His Majesty is a Catholic and most of his people Lutherans. He is said to be a good man, and as much beloved as Prince Johann, the heir-apparent, is disliked. They were talking of the King's having been seen to shed tears a day or two before, while standing in his balcony to see the troops pass in review—the Prince being in command, and his impolitic conduct at Leipsic just made public.

VIII.

Napoleon said, that the enthusiasm of others abated his, and I may venture to confess, that the enthusiasm of the weather

abated mine. Dresden, with all its charming associations, was un-get-about-able, from the violence of the wind and rain, and, as my companion's engagements would not allow him to go to bed "with orders to the servant to call us the first fine day," we decided to shorten our visit. I proposed, myself, to return to Dresden during the Indian Summer; but, lest some cross-thread might be weaving to prevent this, we picked out, from the sights still unvisited—the one we could see nowhere else—the sixty thousand varieties of fragile "vessels of honor." He who has not been to this metropolis of China at Dresden, is only a rustic in tea-pot-dom, I was quite aware; and I was incapable of risking the opportunity of accomplishing myself in the knowledge of every known shape of clay that would respectably hold water.

The price of being shown through the vaults of the Japanese Palace, where this collection is to be seen, is about two dollars, and it is generally visited by strangers in parties, to divide the expense—only six being allowed to enter at a time. Dr. Bartlett joined us with his party of three, and, as we found a Frenchman waiting at the door, to offer his sixth, we were at once introduced to the king's dish-washer-in-chief, a dignified woman, who prides herself on having washed the sixty thousand pieces of china, annually, for *eleven years*, without breaking an article! Her portrait should be engraved and pasted on every kitchen dresser for a bright example.

After recording our names in the visitor's album at the upper landing, we descended to the vaults and commenced our tour of amazement. There are nineteen rooms, (separated by gates, so that the visitors may not wander out of reach of the custodian's eye,) and, as the roof is vaulted and low, and the light comes in

rather dungeon-wise, the *individuals* on the shelves (for there is only one piece of china of a kind) look thoughtful and impressive —or, as the Persian zoology says of the griffin, "capable of religion." Of course I cannot describe even two of these five hundred kinds of tea-pots. The article is not depictable in language. But, bewildering as is the variety of shapes, it is curious (I caught myself stopping to remark) how the most extravagant and original of them seem, after all, only one's idea "better expressed;" how sure one is that he has himself thought of such a tea-pot, or of such a vase; and how one would have to take clay and *try*, before he could appreciate the difficulty of inventing an addition to these forms of convenience and beauty. You can realize the audacity of a man's thinking himself capable of conceiving even what is here, when I mention that the mere MS. catalogue of this collection of vessels (one of a kind) fills *five folio volumes!*

"Of course, there are "loves" of tea-pots among them, and cups and saucers perfectly irresistible. It is hard to keep one's hands off them. Touch one, however, and up trots the irrefragable Royal Dish-washer, with a nervous order that you should put it down—holding her hands under yours, meantime, to catch it in the possible event of your dropping it. Some of the specimens are of great value. There is one set of china, which was given by the King of Prussia to the Elector of Saxony, *in exchange for a regiment of dragoons fully equipped!* Three common-looking yellow plates were shown us, one of them broken, which are of great price—this kind being made for the Emperor of China alone, and the exportation punishable by death. There were two or three specimens of Connecticut earthenware (squash pie-plates) —in significant contrast! Close by them were magnificent pres-

ents of Sevres porcelain from Napoleon, the pictures on them representing scenes of his own history. (One wonders, by the way, that the Saxons are content to preserve these reminiscences of their king's unpatriotic fidelity* to the great trampler.) The Japanese and Chinese fancy-ware is as grotesque in design as it is beautiful in material, and shows a national sensuality, gross and ludicrous, without any very mischievous wickedness. Some of the China vases are as large as half-hogsheads—affecting one like a rose as big as an umbrella. The beginnings of the art of making porcelain, by Bottcher, the discoverer, are treasured with great care. They are dishes, rude and unsightly enough, but it would encourage a beginner at anything to see these failures, which are even advanced steps of a "Bottcher," and then look around to see the splendid perfection he ultimately arrived at. Some of the things we most admired in this vast and unique col-

* When the French approached Dresden, the magistrates of the city came out of the gates and presented themselves before Napoleon. "Who are you?" said he, in a quick and rude tone. "Members of the Municipality," replied the trembling burgomasters. "Have you bread for my soldiers?" "Our resources have been quite exhausted by the requisitions of the Russians and Prussians." "Ha! it is impossible, is it? I know no such word. Furnish me bread and meat and wine. I know all you have done: you deserve to be treated as a conquered people, but I spare you from my regard to your king: he is the saviour of your country." The next day the King of Saxony returned to Dresden, and placed himself and all his resources at the disposal of the French Emperor; a proceeding in the highest degree gratifying to Napoleon, as it proved the adherence of a valuable ally, secured the protection of a line of fortresses, and restored him to the rank he most coveted—the arbiter of the destinies and protector of the thrones of European sovereigns.—*Alison.*

lection are wholly indescribable—I am happy to say! I rejoice that there is something in this world that must give its own first impression—unfamiliarized, I mean, by inevitable approach through a long avenue of *scribble.*

The Japanese Palace is a fine structure, with beautiful grounds extending to the bank of the Elbe, and the two floors above the porcelain vaults are occupied by the Royal Gallery of Sculpture, and the Dresden Library. Its peculiar architecture gives the palace its name, the inner court being surrounded by gigantic Japanese caryatides—grotesque figures of human monsters, supporting capitals in the places of pillars. The same ludicrous Japanese columns are seen in the Zwinger Palace; and, by these and the smaller specimens of images from that country, which are seen in the porcelain vaults, the stomach and face seem to be thought, in Java, equally presentable parts of the human body the dress as carefully arranged to show one as the other.

We walked through the gallery of Sculpture, and saw, among other things, two heads of old Roman Emperors which were remarkable likenesses of Washington and Jackson. There is a great number of statues in this collection, and they stand so thick about the rooms and in the centres and corners, and, withal, are on such low pedestals, that it strikes one more like a nude fancy ball than with the common effect of statûary. There is no medium in the merit of sculpture, and a great deal of this is rubbish.

One of the most agreeable hours, of our last day in Dresden, was passed in the Historical Museum, which occupies a wing of the Zwinger Palace—a structure, by the way, that, though unfinished, is one of the prettiest *bijoux* of a beginning for a royal

residence that I ever saw. This, I believe, is the richest collection of armor and weapons in the world. The suits of armor are all put upon manikins and mounted on wooden horses, so that a walk through the semicircular gallery is like walking down a line of knights in the saddle. The amount of it all seems to be, that, for lack of safety out of doors, men went about in iron houses; for the principal design must have been to shed blows and missiles, as no human being except a Samson, could have used his arms with any activity under two hundred pounds' weight of iron. The wearer could not even turn his head, but was obliged to look straight forward through the crevice in his helmet. Augustus the Strong, who had the luck to be a King and a Hercules, was an exception, and they show, in the same Museum, a horse-shoe which he broke with one hand, while he gave a coy beauty a bag of gold with the other! No common man could walk under his armor.

The curiosities presented in this Museum are capital mnemonics for history. Here is the sword of Luther and his beer-jug; the cocked hat of Peter the Great, (a funny little thing enough;) the pistols of Charles XII. of Sweden, worn by him on the day of his death; the armor of Gustavus Adolphus, which he left off to put on the buff suit in which he was killed; the dagger of Rudolph of Swabia, who lost his hand while raising it to wound his brother, the Emperor Henry; the iron flails used by the Bohemians in the Hussite war; the sword with which Chancellor Crell was beheaded; the armor of Sobieski; and, (in the way of relics with more tangible and fresher associations,) the saddle and boots which Napoleon used at the battle of Dresden. These last hang up in a glass case. They are slit open from the heel

up, as it rained during the day, and the Emperor, finding them too wet to come off with ease, expedited the process with a penknife. It shows a small foot, and the sole is quite thin and with the least possible heel. Some anecdote writer mentions that he had beautiful feet, but that he could not bear the least compliment about them, and always wore his boots too large. It might have been in these boots, by the way, (for it was while he was at Dresden,) that Napoleon stood when the Emperor of Austria endeavored to please him by the remark, that, after some search among the archives, he had discovered the Bonapartes to have been sovereigns of a principality in Italy. The reply was so good that I should like, for a relic, even a piece of the boots in which he stood when he made it. "Sire!" said Napoleon, "I thank you—*but I have no need of ancestors!*"

IX.

We found our countryman and friend, Dr. Bartlett, shivering before one of the master-pieces of the gallery, (the door-keeper insisting on the etiquette of leaving cloaks in the hall, though the rooms were damp and cold,) and we joined shiver and curiosity, and made the round of the rooms together. The *Madonna del Sisto* was, of course, our first point of pilgrimage. All the world knows it by engravings and copies. Raphael has here given immortality to Pope Sixtus, after whom it is named, and whose portrait is drawn in the figure of the old man kneeling to the Virgin. The Pope's dues for this world's fame should be made out in two items—so much to his piety, so much to the

artist's pencil. The picture takes to itself, at once, a separate chamber in every one's memory who sees it. Wilkie said of the face of the Virgin, that it was "nearer the perfection of female beauty and elegance, than anything in painting." The two child-angels, leaning on their elbows, and looking up towards the infant in the Virgin's arms, are in every portfolio of engravings, the world over; but you see them, for the first time, in their true beauty, in the picture. Raphael felt the celestial prophecy of children's beauty. No lovelier images of redeemed humanity exist in art. The expression of the Virgin is that of one whose existence is illumined within, and who turns, on the world without, only the thoughtful sweetness of submission to what shall befall her in life. I have seen approaches to such expression in living faces. The picture, altogether, is a noble master-piece, and it doubtless does one good to lay his eyes and heart open, for a while, to its lovely and inspired purity.

In this same room is the recumbent Magdalen, with an open volume under her breast, perhaps the most copied and favorite small picture in the world. In the different rooms I found some thirty or forty originals of the pictures I had admired for years, in engravings and copies, and a few that I thought I ought to have heard of—but the difference between seeing and reading of pictures is as great as between eating a dinner and hearing of it; and as this gallery, besides, has been described by writers innumerable, I will hurry over my mention of it. We made three visits during our short stay in Dresden, and *fed* upon it, as all lovers of the art must. It is a glorious collection, and was treated deferentially by Frederick the Great and Napoleon, neither of whom ventured to injure it in their destructive wars, though now

it is suffering from a more quiet enemy, neglect—many of the pictures going to ruin for lack of care.

Dresden, by the way, was the birthplace of Raphael Mengs, an artist who painted closer to my feeling of art than some others who have more renown; and there are two or three portraits of him in the gallery, painted by himself—two, particularly, (in pastel, representing him as a youth and as a man,) to which I was sorry I did not live nearer. The "world's ninety-nine" would call them portraits of a plain face; but, for the hundredth, there was inexhaustible beauty in it—a beauty afloat in the expression, and wholly unfixable and indefinable, even though visibly transferred to a picture. He drew from his soul, and his pencil obeyed his consciousness, and not the memory of "his face in a glass."

These pastel pictures are a peculiar feature of the Dresden Gallery—resembling paintings on porcelain—and there are, perhaps, hundreds of them, which seem to be a collection of portraits of the beautiful women of a certain period. It is a most interesting variety of specimens of female loveliness, and there is here and there one, of whom the type in real life seems to be lost. I wonder, indeed, that, among all the kinds of antiquaries whom we hear of—men curious in obsolete coins, pipes, snuff-boxes, armor, and walking-sticks—we never hear of an *antiquary of female beauty*, a collector of portraits of the rarest kinds and degrees of the loveliness that has come and gone. It strikes me that a Society for the arrest, on canvas, of the most remarkable of these fleeting valuables, and the formation of a gallery in which the beauty of a particular epoch should be treasured,

would be as reasonable as some very respectable manias, and much more gratifying to posterity.

The town was stuck over with placards announcing that STRAUSS (the great waltz composer) and his band from Vienna, were to give a concert in the evening. The Germans, with their musical relish refined up to Mozart and Beethoven, speak lightly of Strauss, and call his heel-moving compositions mere coffee-house music; but music they are, to me, (though perhaps but half way between science and nature,) especially when played by a band that works, under him, with the unerring obedience of the hairs in his eyelids, and I was delighted with the opportunity of hearing them once more—my remembrance of the same band at Vienna some years ago being still very vivid. We went rather early to secure seats, but found every one ticketed as engaged, and were obliged to content ourselves with standing-room. Strauss was received with great enthusiasm. He is a small, zealous-clergyman-looking man, with pale face, black hair, cut very short, inevitable little eyes, tight black clothes and white cravat. He leads with a violin in his left hand, using the bow to mark the time, and playing occasionally; but, in the excited passages, turning toward the critical instrument and beckoning out the emphasis with a gesticulation that would "tell" in a pulpit. Strauss looks like what we call in our country, very expressively, "an *efficient* man"—meaning a man who can do much with little—and in this lies probably the secret of his success, for his original genius as a composer is small. The music he gave us, however, was most enjoyable, and he carried his audience with him as buoyantly as could be desired.

I was a little surprised in his audience. They were two-thirds English, and, though I had often heard that the best English society to be found on the continent was at Dresden, I was not prepared to see so unexceptionably high-bred an assemblage. If there is a style of people on earth, unmistakeably detestable, it is the English who are a little below the best class; and, as the continent is the place where these come to breathe, you find plenty of them in most public places, and you know one of them at a glance. *Fœnam habet in cornu.* But the great attractions of Dresden have doubtless drawn thither a set of the veritably well-bred, and they have *established a hedge* which makes the place uncomfortable to those on the wrong side of it.

From Strauss's own band have sprung his two most formidable rivals in dance-music, and their new productions, before being danced to, are heard at a concert given on purpose. Lanner and Strauss have an ingenious way of getting a fair expression of public opinion as to the merits of their respective waltzes. At the door the company receive slips of paper, marked with degrees of approbation, and, for each set of waltzes that is played, they collect a vote which records the opinion of the audience, *before it is known whether it is the production of Strauss or Lanner.* This secures an impartial opinion, and the decision is said to be very exciting to the Viennese delittanti.

X.

The house where Tieck lived, in the market-square of Dresden, is more sought out, as an object of curiosity, than the Marcolini palace occupied by Napoleon; but we made a plunge through

the rain to see both—the latter partly from interest in the dramatic clique that was here when Napoleon was treating the people to gratuitous theatricals—Talma, Mademoiselle Mars and others. Dresden must have been a droll little extempore Paris, in those days. Tieck's lodgings were on the second floor of a house quite too good looking for a poet's, and standing on a corner of the market where cluster the flower-women. Close by it, *apropos*, stands a *café*, where, (for a wonder in Germany,) we found a *veritable* cup of coffee. A great *wretchedness* for me, (the word is not so much too strong as the coffee is too weak,) has been the lack, in all the German cities, of this sustainer of head and heart —the substitute they give you for it, tasting like it with the resemblance of a caricature. I fancy the secret of German coffee has been plummeted by a traveller who thus writes, and whose information I give for the benefit of the poor, if there be any such in our country, who cannot afford the beverage:—

"Economical substitutes have been, of late years, adopted for tea and coffee, (in Germany,) as coffee is now generally made from *acorns*, prepared in the following manner:—The acorns, when perfectly ripe, should be kept for some short time in a dry place. They are afterwards cut in small pieces, first throwing away the husk; then roasted, ground, and prepared precisely as coffee. This preparation, the use of which is recommended by eminent medical men, is said to be valuable both as a tonic, and for the nourishment it affords. It is daily becoming in more general use throughout Germany, and may be found prepared at all the chemists. The *blossoms of the linden-tree** supply the

* In America, sometimes called the *lime-tree*.

place of tea with the poor. The flavor is very agreeable, and it is, to say the least, a very innocent ptisan, and certainly does not irritate the nerves. I have cured myself frequently of a slight cold by drinking plentifully of it. The German doctors recommend it as a beverage in almost every disease."

The square in front of Tieck's house was filled with our old acquaintances, the traders from the Leipsic Fair, (who give a short repetition of the Fair at Dresden before separating,) and really it was pleasant to be recognized from the counters of the booths, as we passed along under our umbrellas. The Tyrolese merchants, more particularly, have a national manner to set off their picturesque dress, and if you have once spent a couple of groschen with them, they always after give you a smile, worth taking in a strange city. Our ears renewed acquaintance, also, with the different bands of wandering minstrels, who are only allowed to enter these German cities during the Fair, and who, during that merry time, give the inhabitants no respite from listening. There are so many of these little companies of musicians that they are obliged to manage very carefully not to run the music of two or three bands into one; and there is sometimes an amusing contention for the privilege of an unoccupied street corner. The rainy weather let us also into a secret of their costume, which is perhaps worth recommending to sailors. They dress in a kind of uniform jacket, like a military band; but, when it rains, they produce a *leather coat-tail* that buttons on behind, and comfortably sheds the water from the small of the back. As rheumatism is particularly *at home* in this part of the body, the defence is doubtless founded on true philosophy.

I should doubt whether there is a more beautiful promenade,

for its length, in the world, than the Terrace of Bruhl, a sort of upper-lip over the river which is the mouth of Dresden. It is a mountainous bank, high above both the Elbe below it and the town behind it, and commands views of the lovely environs of the capital for many miles around. The palace of the great *vaurien* of prime-ministers, Bruhl, stands upon it, looking neglected and deserted, but sumptuous *cafés*, for the public, occupy the most commanding parts of the grounds, and it is said to be a brilliant resort in the pleasant seasons. Howitt says, that you can see from this terrace the cottage of Retzch, (the Shakspeare of the pencil,) and, if that is so, we had the satisfaction of seeing it, though without recognition, for we perused the mountain-sides in vain, with admiring eyes, in search of it.

We left Dresden, feeling that we had seen it to the greatest disadvantage, but I hoped to return to it some day in the sunshine. By general testimony, it is the most agreeable of the German capitals, as a residence for the tasteful and quiet, and a charming perch for the traveller tired of being on the wing.

Of the vast plain that lies between Dresden and Berlin, history says a great deal, but the traveller can say very little. One travels the whole day in the rail cars without seeing a bill, and though one knows that human blood has been poured upon the fields around him like rain, it does not quite remove the monotony of the ride, to remember the heroes of whose fame it is the sanguinary garden. Southey expresses the one common feeling in such places:—

"Was it a soothing or a mournful thought,
Amid this scene of slaughter, as we stood

Where myriads had with recent fury fought,
To mark how gentle Nature still pursued
Her quiet course, as if she took no care
For what her noblest work had suffered there!"

The truth of these beautiful lines, however, is a *very little* trenched upon by the fact that Nature *does* take notice of spilt blood. It is said in an authentic account of Waterloo, that "the fertility of the ground on which the battle was fought, increased greatly for several years after it took place. Nowhere were richer crops produced in the whole of Belgium, and the corn is said to have waved thickest and to have been of a darker color, over those spots where the dead were interred, so that in Spring it was possible to discover them by this mark alone."

I had left my brother at Leipsic, and kept on alone to Berlin —the most weary six hours of monotonous travel that was ever put down to mortal credit, in penance. Towards the close of the day, however, a very handsome and gentlemanlike youth threw a straw to my drowning spirits, in the shape of a proposal to go to the same hotel on our arrival, and by eight o'clock we were prolonging existence with a supper worthy of the *Café de Paris*, for my friend turned out to be an instructed traveller as to comforts and provender.

LETTERS

FROM

WATERING PLACES.

LETTER I.

SHARON SPRINGS, June 15, 1848.

DEAR MORRIS: I presume that a very literal description of this place would be of value as well as of interest to our readers—many of them, probably, not having been here, and even those graver persons who would not seek it as a fashionable resort, being, at least, liable to the many diseases for which its waters have a cure. These are days, when, to find a Bethesda, you must intrude upon a haunt of the gay.

To start fair, then—Sharon Springs are five hours from Albany, three by railroad, and two by stage-coach. Passengers arrive in time to dress comfortably for dinner. The drive up is not particularly picturesque, but it is through woods and fields, and this, as a change from omnibusing between sidewalks and brick walls, is, at least, refreshing. The ascent is said to be nine hundred feet, and, at the last mile, you come within the embrace of two wooded mountain-ridges, projecting like outspread arms to receive you. As if to complete the picture of Mother Nature inviting her children to a fountain of health, the hotel is placed upon a swelling upland, lying like a bosom between these outstretching

arms, and, from below a knoll on the left, issues the milky-hued spring whose salutary flow has such virtues of healing.

The hotel is a vast, colonnaded structure, with accommodations for three hundred guests. Mr. Gardner, "mine host," caters most industriously for his table, having, for example, at present, two thousand wild pigeons fattening in his dove-cotes, which were caught in nets on the adjacent mountains. With a capital French cook, and such coffee and bread as are seldom found in even the public houses of the city, the delicate palate of the invalid is very nicely ministered to, while those who come only for pleasure may respond to the appetizing breezes of the hills, "with good emphasis and discretion." The head-waiter looks like an emperor, and has his ebon adjuncts in exemplary training; the livery-stable turns out good equipages, and there are billiards and bowling-alleys, a vast drawing-room with its piano, and (for the romantic) a portico whereon rises a moon.

The far view, across the valley of the Mohawk, is very extensive and varied—lacking only the feature of water—while the lap of Mother Sharon, spread out beneath the swelling bosom on which reposes the hotel, is a terrace of cultivated fields near enough to show the waving of the grain. On the southwest side of the "big house," as the country people call it, lies a bowl-shaped vale, the slopes of which resemble the ornamental woods of a park, and in the centre of this is a village of twenty or thirty buildings, the bathing-houses lying just below upon the stream. A hundred yards farther down is a waterfall, which foams over a sloping, rocky descent of some forty feet, the noisy brook winding its way thence through a dark ravine, furnished with the shade and rocks requisite for the between meal reveries of the fashionable.

Everybody, here, bathes in the sulphur-water once a day, and the "Doctor's orders" being to bathe always on the emptiest attainable stomach, the company is usually assembled at the bathing-house an hour or so before dinner. The cripples are seen limping their way down the hill at about twelve, and, of this halting regiment, of course, I am one. The beaux and belles follow a half hour later—the ladies carefully shrouded in sun-bonnet and *peignoir*. There are two springs on the hillside above the bathing-house, each with its pavilion and seats—one called the "White Sulphur," the other the "Magnesia Spring," and these, like the platform at Saratoga, and the pump-room at Bath, are the places ordinarily used for commencing acquaintance—contiguity and a common libation being, by usage, justificatory of the formidable "first remark."

The Frenchman mentioned by Sir Francis Head in his "Bubbles of Brunnen," must have been peculiarly constituted, to have said, of a sulphur bath, that, in it, "*on devient absolument amoureux de soi-même.*" The ladies, too, whom he mentions as having a wooden lid to their bathing-tubs, on which their gentlemen acquaintances were wont to sit and entertain them, (the fair heads being alone visible,) must have been willing to be admired in most unperfumed air, for the aroma from the warm bath, to speak plainly, resembles that of eggs that have outlived their usefulness. The water may well be forgiven, however, for it is certainly a most immediate and efficacious agent, acting homœopathically, I find, by the way, in first aggravating the disease to which it subsequently gives relief. Its cures of cutaneous disorders and of rheumatism, as narrated by the resident frequenters of the lounging-places, are very wonderful; and, indeed, the virtues

of these Springs of Sharon, are allowed, I believe, to be quite equal to the more famed but less accessible Sulphur Springs of Virginia.

The bath, I find, leaves a very soft feeling between finger and thumb, but whether it is an embellishing cosmetic, I cannot positively say. The villagers cook with the water, and, of course, breathe its atmosphere perpetually, but they are not particularly fair, and there is no local evidence in its favor, except that an Indian girl, one of the small remainder of a tribe that resides here, is the belle of the village, and has a skin of beautiful texture and clearness. The water is said to whiten the teeth, and hers would lie invisible on a snow-drift. It acts on metals—sometimes to the visitor's surprise—as rings and chains and the setting of jewels, unless of pure gold, are turned black by only the vapor of the bath-rooms. I found half a dozen pieces of silver, in one of the pockets of my waistcoat, completely discolored. Though it embrowns silver in the pocket, however, it, unhappily, turns no darker that upon the head—a gentleman with "silvery hair" bathing every day in the next room to me, and daily coming out, I regret to inform you, as venerable as he goes in.

I have taken a bath between the foregoing paragraph and this, and took the opportunity to inquire (of my sulphuric aqueductor) as to the parentage of an Indian girl who sits by the spring. She is not of pure aboriginal blood, her father being a Frenchman. There are two families here, the fathers of both French and the mothers Indian, and each with eight or nine children, but apparently in very different degrees of prosperity—one occupying a handsome two-story house in the village, the other living in a tent up the ravine. They make baskets, fans, bows-and-arrows,

etc., for sale, and visits to them are among the amusements of the strangers at the Springs.

I think, with the foregoing most categorical account of Sharon, I will stop—though a return to my own society, (of which a complete monopoly has given me rather a surfeit,) is the alternative of writing, and I would scribble away for an hour or two longer, if my damaged eyes would let me.

LETTER II.

SHARON SPRINGS, June, 1848.

DEAR MORRIS: I should have been half-way down this page—perhaps ready to blot and turn over—but for an attraction on the portico, which you, of course, suppose to have been a lady. Many, however, as are the new arrivals to-day in this breezy resort, and happy as I should have been if either dame or damsel had helped herself to any portion of my time or acquaintance, the delay I speak of was unshared by any seeker of fashion or physic—a pretty butterfly of the fields having been my only detainer. As what I saw, and remained awhile to study, touches the great question of comparative psychology, you will excuse my minuteness in telling you all about it.

My chair was on the broad step of the colonnade, and, without thinking particularly of my immortal part, of which the butterfly, that has once been a worm, is the received type among poets and philosophers, I noticed that one of these happy insects had taken up his station on a certain spot of the gravel-walk below. You have often observed, I dare say, how dull their wings are without, and how gay within, and how they stand apparently on edge, opening and shutting like an animated sam-

ple-book of calico. Having sat out the sunsets of several days in the same place, I had a previous acquaintance just there—an exemplary mamma robin, who had builded in a maple sapling on the left, ("woodman, spare *that tree,*") and who brought in the worms from all quarters to her young, with a diligence that made me sigh for such an agent for THE HOME JOURNAL. I presently noticed, however, that—fly from her nest when she would—the robin was assailed by the butterfly; and that, before proceeding on her quest of worms, she underwent a dodging chase all over the lawn, and escaped, at last, only by a long straight flight over the fields. The valorous insect then returned to the very same pebble wherefrom he had started, and, I observed in the course of the hour I watched him, that he darted thence to attack every worm-hunting bird that skimmed over, and invariably drove them before him in terror.

Now, whether loves and hates can be carried into another existence is a much discussed question, upon a decision of which, in the affirmative, a prudent man would make some difference in this world's outlays and settlings-up. We learn many things by analogy and comparison, Nature repeating herself frequently in her lower and higher lessons. Here is a brilliant, winged insect, that has passed through a previous life as a grovelling worm. In that defenceless and subject existence, it and its children were the prey of merciless birds—gobbled up without notice if seen abroad, and kept in constant terror when in the family bosom. The principal, if not the first use, which the once-worm makes of a new-winged existence, is to return to the gravel where it has helplessly crawled, and make war upon the enemy it left behind. It can do this successfully, for, though possessing none of the

bodily strength of the hated bird, its mysterious attack inspires a terror which unnerves. His worm-children and grand-children are still there, crawling and defenceless, and though, in the gorgeous butterfly, they do not recognize an ancestor, he can alight close by the old hole and scare off those victimizing *bills*. Invaluable departed grandfather!—eh, General? But put this down in your psychology, and—if you get your wings first, and "there is anything in it"—let us hear from you, in a quiet way.

And now to business—for I sat down, not to bespeak civility from your winged hereafter, my dear Morris, but to give you a practical account of Sharon Springs and their surroundings.

Southwest from hence, twenty-two miles, at the outlet of Otsego Lake, and astride of the head-waters of the Susquehannah, lies Cooperstown. It is, of course, among the "lions" of Sharon. I felt bound to make a pilgrimage to it as a double home: first, that of the author who possesses more of what is meant by genius than any American that has lived; and, second, as the home of the bright river in whose valley, a hundred miles farther down, I lived that part of my life that has been most after my taste and wishes. The Susquehannah breaks out of the lake just at Cooper's door, and it is a magnificent river, as his is a magnificent mind. As a twin fountain-head, of intellect that honors the country and waters that fertilize it, it is a spot that has a good right to be famous, and indeed is already fenced in by appreciation, and ready for the pilgrimages of the poetical and prophetic.

Devoting the hinges of two days to the excursion, so as to be at the lake in the picturesque hours and return in time for my diurnal bath, I delivered myself over to a one-horse wagon and

driver, at that contemplative hour of the afternoon when the dinner is,

"Though lost to sight, to memory dear."

We began with a straight drag up the mountain above Sharon, and thence, for eight or nine miles, tracked very much such a line as a cautious ant would find it necessary to make, after the tack of a Connecticut sloop, in getting from leeward to windward across a cargo of pumpkins. Railroads and steamboats make us forget what hills are. In this age of multitudinized progress, we lose sight of how toilsomely, on the high-ways and by-ways, they still have to fag it through, in single harness. (No sermon intended *this* time.)

Eight miles on our road we came to the edge of a table-summit, overlooking Cherry Valley, and here lay, below us, a patched-quilt picture of innumerable farms—fields of the apparent bigness of fenced-in thumb-nails, and red houses, like cayenne pepper, sprinkled over them. What a pity it is, (picturesquely,) that red ochre is cheaper than white lead, and there is, therefore, this economical compulsion upon the poor man, to make his house a deformity to the landscape! Cherry Valley has a snug, peaceable, nestled-down look, its mountains trimmed up high like a well-disciplined military whisker, and its meadows looking utterly incapable of burrs or thistles; and, as to the village, if there ever walked into its pretty street the spirit of scandal and backbiting, such as finds its way into villages more exposed, I can only say that no corner of earth can look innocent enough to expel it Roses before every door, damsels reading in every window, sidewalks tidy, and a piano vigorously played in the parlor of the

principal inn—I should scarce know how to add a charm to it as a home for

"The world forgetting, by the world forgot."

I fancy, as I saw no sign of a *cherry*-tree in the whole town, that it may owe its name to French derivation, and was possibly called *La Vallée chérie,* by a first settler. I did not ask the landlord at the tavern, for he looked a matter-of-fact man and I was afraid of his spoiling my pretty guess. And, apropos of that landlord, he seems to play the part of the elf in fairy land, whose business it is to prick mortal visitors hourly with a pin, and so keep them in mind of their mortality. "You a'nt as spry as you used to be!" said he, as I hobbled into the wagon over the fore-wheel; and with this most un-stirrup-cup valedictory, just tart enough to call my thoughts from the happy scene to my less happy self, I drove off, dulled to the beauties of Cherry Valley, but musing on the uses of pity and on the sorrows of dilapidation by rheumatism.

Our first view of Otsego Lake was from woods high above it, and by glimpses through the trees which hem in a very sudden descent. An abrupt opening showed us an extremity of the lake immediately under us, and a town, apparently all villas and gardens, laid out upon a natural terrace of the bank. Away west stretched the calm plane of the Otsego, narrow like a river, (and, indeed, of the average breadth of the Hudson, I should say;) beautiful, uncommonly beautiful mountain-shores, shutting it in, and the slopes on the far side charmingly pictured with cultivation. A lake's mirror was never set in a prettier *encadrement* by the frame-making eddies of the retiring deluge, and it is so situated,

by the way, that its entire re-gilding, by the sunsets, is visible from every quarter of the town. The path of the eye, from Cooperstown to the setting sun, is up a nine-mile mirror of wooded water; and, what with such a foreground, and the mists and reflections of its clear and placid bosom, they should see more of the "dolphin glories" of the West than the inhabitants of other places. I forget, at this moment, whether Cooper's books are rich in descriptions of sunsets, but they might be, without drawing much on his imagination.

The steep road down the wooded mountain above Cooperstown, shoots you into the village somewhat as a trout arrives in a mill-pond by the sluice, and it was *partly* owing to this that I crossed the natural curiosity I half came to see—(the outbreak of the Susquehannah from Otsego Lake)—without doing it the honors of recognition. Over the bridge which spans the source of one of the world's greatest rivers, drove I, (I am ashamed of my magnetism to confess,) with neither tributary look nor thought —as unconscious of that little brooklet's capability to go on waxing to the ocean, as is the dull sixpence which you, my dear Morris, pass up for a man in an omnibus, of that thumb-and-finger's capability to outlet songs on their waxing way to immortality. (Let us take a little breath and begin again!)

I say "partly"—for, under ordinary circumstances, I am not a man to pass lightly over any shape of running water. Streams have souls—or affect me as if they had. But, on one point, my driver and I differed. It is *my* way, when there is a prospect of being admired, to linger. It was *his* way to whip up. *I* should have slackened rein on entering Cooperstown—*he* dashed in at a pace which amazed beholders, whisking me, at the same time,

over the incipient Susquehannah, and leaving me, of course, very little attention to spare from rheumatic holdings-on. I found afterwards that I had also shot past Mr. Cooper's baronial-looking gate without observing it, and, indeed, if I had gone to bed immediately on arriving, I should have slept upon a first impression of Cooperstown, consisting of two liquefied streaks of houses and a sudden stop. As the historian of John Gilpin says :—

"When he next doth take a ride,"

(with a black horse and sorrel driver,) your humble servant will bargain to respectfully locate the accelerations.

I have not much to say about Cooperstown, now we are there. It looks like a town where everybody "gets along," where there are six or seven rather rich people, and no such thing as a pauper. The principal tavern looks a good deal fingered and leaned against; the "hardware stores" are prosperously well-built; the boys, playing in the street, draw grown-up audiences, whose pleased attention to the unvarying varlets shows that there is nothing better going on; and, in the windows of the houses in the side-streets, sit young ladies without a sign of a shirt-collar in their company, and this last bespeaks a town of exhausted uncertainties—everybody's exact value ascertained and no object in visiting except with definite errand or invitation. In towns of this size, by the way, young ladies have hardly a fair opportunity, as any handsome male natives, who have an ambition that would swim, find the scope of a village too bathing-tub-y, and are all off for deeper water and other adorations. By glimpses that I caught, over rose-trees and picket fences, I should say there was

many a charming girl, wasting her twilights, in Cooperstown, while I saw no sign of the gender to match—nothing masculine stirring except very little boys and very manifest "heads of families." In the great punch-bowl of a well-mixed republic, there should be no lumps of sugar that are not duly stirred into contact with the ingredients they are made to temper and with which they are ready to dissolve, and I would suggest to Miss Beecher, (the excellent apostle of loveliness unappropriated,) a turn of her phil-belle-opic spoon into these un-agitated corners.

I found Mr. Cooper at home, and, as there was still a remainder of daylight, he put on his hat at my request to show me the the source of the Susquehannah. Whether the river should have presented the stranger to Mr. Cooper, or Mr. Cooper presented me to the river—which was the monarch and which the "gold stick in waiting"—is a question of precedence that occurred to me. It was something to see two such sources together—the pourings-out from both fountains, from visible head and visible head-waters, sure to last famous till doomsday, and, with appreciative homage, I, mentally, followed the viewless after-flow of both. Mr. Cooper, meantime, was as unpretending as any other man, and the Susquehannah flowed away—like water you can see the whole of.

"Home as Found" leaves little to tell of Mr. Cooper's house and grounds. It is a fine old square mansion, with a noble hall in the centre, the roof and window-mouldings handsomely architecturalized over the first design, and all within having an air of elegant comfort. The author's study and library is one of the large rooms on the lower floor, and into this I did not walk, of course, without some vague feeling of the presence of spirits that

had there been conjured. It is such a wilderness of books and papers, prints and easy-chairs, as you would expect to find it. The light comes in with the foliage-hue of the wooded lawns outside, and the views from the windows, though the house is in the centre of a village, are such as you get upon park-grounds from the most secluded country-house in England. The neighbors are successfully "planted out," and the walks, in the fenced-in groves of those few acres, tell very little of the close vicinage of streets and shops.

Mr. Cooper was to start for Detroit the next morning, and is as youthful and vigorous, at the approach of his *soixantaine*, as when I first saw him in Paris in '32. He says he is a little increased in weight—weighing now, two hundred and nine—but feels no other premonition of age. His peculiarly manly and rich voice certainly rings as clear as ever, and his pale gray eye—(by the singular inevitableness of which you would perhaps, alone, know him, at first sight, for a man of genius)—sits as bright and steady in its full socket. He walks with the forward-bent head of a thoughtful man, but his back is unbending. Plethora and politics staved off, I should think he might live along healthily with his books for several decades to come.

We got a beautiful view up the lake from the portico of a very fine house belonging to a married niece of Mr. Cooper, the edge of the water being just over the garden paling, and the far-away spread of the glassy plane, unshared by any visible dwelling, seeming to be a property of the grounds we were in. From hence, too, we saw a farm of Mr. Cooper's, two or three miles up the lake on the northern shore. The sloping banks abound in "capabilities" for country-seats, and will, at some future day,

doubtless, be hauled within suburban distance by the iron hook of a railroad, and gemmed with villas.

On my return to Sharon the next morning, I took another road, extending for the first six miles along the edge of the lake—as lovely a ride as a man would care to take without a lovely companion. It was a most heavenly day, the valves of every odorous leaf wide open, and poetry, ready to be written, all along the road. Most any body would have been charming to see and talk to, but I was all alone—that is to say, with a rheumatism I could easily have forgotten, and a driver I was obliged to remember. We reached home at the bathing hour, twelve o'clock, and so, I think, old fellow, I have given you, in this letter, the history of a Sharon day—from bath to bath—and you see what may be done betwixt doses of sulphur! The ladies are talking of an excursion to Lake Ut-say-an-tha, twenty miles off, for to-morrow, and I may send you a chronicle of that.

LETTER III.

SHARON SPRINGS, June, 1848.

DEAR MORRIS: In these days, when Europe is a snuff-box of revolutions, and you take a pinch with every newspaper you open—sneezing at nothing short of ten thousand killed—it seems very idle indeed to offer you so poor a *news*-gay, to smell at, as a letter about a very pleasant day. I am not sure that it is politic. I feel a kind of squirm about my shoulders, as if I were being dwarfed by the inevitable comparison between my letter and the last "extra."

Well—as I said, or sat down to say—it was a day, yesterday, when any breakfast ought to be happy to be eaten. If ours was not, I can only say that coffee and rolls never concealed their feelings more successfully. Everything looked happy. We gathered, on the portico, with each his day before him, and to "go somewhere" was the unanimous proposition. Why is it, by the way, that, although we may be in the loveliest spot of the world, when the weather becomes delightful, we immediately wish to "go somewhere?" Is the sun's shining more sweetly upon a place, the way to make us discontented with it—as the way to make a woman love us less is to love her more? Take this little brace

of contradictions out of your noddle, as you go up the river on Saturday evening, and discuss it with some of your brother pendulums between city and country. Woman and weather are two things I would gladly know more of before I die.

I dare say you have never heard of Lake Ut-say-an-tha. Beating me, as perhaps you do, in arithmetic, I am your match in geography, and it was new to me. Some one of our party suggesting that there was a lake of that name within driving distance of Sharon, the landlord's copy of the "History of Schoharie County" was produced, and in it was found the following passage, which I copy for our mutual neglected education:

"This sheet of water, which affords one of the sources of the Susquehanna, owes its poetic name to the following circumstance. Ut-say-an-tha, a beautiful Indian maiden, gave birth to an illegitimate child on its romantic shore; and a council of chiefs having been called to deliberate on its fate, they decided to drown it in the Lake, and did so; since which it has been known by the name of the unhappy mother."

To the township of Summit, in which lay this bit of geographical poetry, the distance was but twenty miles; and, three ladies promptly consenting to accept my convoy, we were off, half an hour after breakfast, in one of the excellent carriages procurable here, and with such lunch and enthusiasm as could be packed at short warning. It was that kind of Sabbath weather in which Nature seems dressed and resting—every tree looking its "Sunday best," the sky clear and quiet, and the fields of grain, like the Jews in Chatham street, giving in to the spirit of the day by a more quiet demeanor, without making it look gloomy by shutting up shop and suspending business. From Sharon, which

is nine hundred feet nearer the stars than New York, to Summit, which is still a thousand feet higher than Sharon, was a very clear job of *excelsior* for our horses. They could scarce take it too easy, for our taste, however. We travelled at the pace of an omnibus going down town with one passenger, reading every hill-side from top to bottom, as that hindered unit reads the placards on Niblo's fence, and giving every farm-house and its cattle and children, the benefit of our unprejudiced criticism. I may as well advise, here, for the benefit of any visitors to Sharon who may wish to make this excursion, that they should share the early breakfast of the departing guests of the Pavilion, and start for Summit by seven. They will thus reach their destination by one, have time for a ramble round the lake and a picknick in the woods, and adjust the shorter time of their down-hill return to any part of the afternoon and evening that suits them.

The Kobleskill, along whose banks our route lay for several miles, is a river, which, in England, would be large enough to be sung about—as large, for instance, as the Avon—and upon its silver string are strung hundreds of beautiful farms, with meadows feathered with elms, and slopes on either side curving up into well-wooded hill-tops. The stream is inlaid through a long mountain valley, and, like modest worth, is better estimated by what it brightens and fertilizes than by any great show of a current. Every four or five miles, the farm-houses cluster into a village; and nice and tidy they looked, as do all villages cornered away, out of the reach of grand routes and railways. We noticed a peculiar style of architecture at one of the taverns—a colonnade formed of trees with simply the bark taken off, and about a foot's length of every branch and twig left

projecting. While the body of the trees was carefully painted white, however, the projecting stumps were daintily colored green —the effect being that of a portico suffering from an eruption; and less agreeable, probably, to those who, like us, come from a Bethesda for cutaneous diseases, than to travellers from the other direction.

All through this region, and towards Otsego Lake, as well as through the valley of the Kobleskill, I observed that every farm has its grave; and this, not fenced in or secluded, but with the white slab rising from the middle of a crop of grain, or a field of potatoes. Among such prosperous people, this cannot be from any economy of hearse or church-yard; and, as a man cannot very well see his barns and cattle from under ground, nor, by force of vicinage, rise again with the crops sewn around him, I do not very well understand how the custom could become so general. It set me to thinking whether the usual post-mortem gregariousness, practised all over the world, was based upon any strong human instinct. I am inclined to think it is. I fancy that, however, while above ground, one may like to shove other people off to a distance, it is natural to wish for neighbors under ground, even in elbow-jogging propinquity. They have a lonely time of it, those Kobleskill ghosts, I venture to say; and if I chance to die in Schoharie County, I trust to be taken where I can be buried sociably with my kind, and not put invidiously away, with crops that come to light again so much more expeditiously.

There is a ridge, just before reaching Summit, from which, as from the joining rims of two contiguous bowls, you can see into two deep-down and mountain-girt valleys, which look as if they

might have been made by Nature for two separate nations. It is like getting a peep over the edge of the horizon and seeing where the sun goes to, when he sets. This high ground is studded thickly with balsam firs, whose superb cones give the woods a look like the plantations of an English park.

There *is* water enough in Lake Ut-say-an-tha to drown a baby, but hardly more. A man of a trifling turn of mind might call it a pond. I dare say it covers an acre. The village of Summit, with its one street, and the lake, must look, to a bird in the air, like a button and button-hole. There are no woods on its banks, and the water, of course, looks glary and unromantic. We had no time to go to the forest beyond, and look up the finger of the Past that had beckoned us thither; and, after a dinner upon the one salt ham which stocked the larder of the inn, we re-pocketed our expectations and started to return. It was a heavenly evening, and the drive home was a luxury to remember.

LETTER IV.

SHARON SPRINGS, August 7, 1848.

WELL, my dear Morris, what do you wish to hear from this thousand-foot elevation above you? The daily wheel turns around very regularly here. Our three purveyors, the French cook, Mother Nature, and the leader of the band, supply the three principal necessities of the place—food, sulphur and music—with praiseworthy abundance and regularity. The cook, particularly, it is thought by the guests here, deserves an honorary diploma—the table being of a most un-watering-place-ish delicacy and excellence—and, for the matter of that, even old Mother Nature, if "a character from her last place" were of any importance to her, might have all the recommendations she could ask, of her Sharon brimstone and breezes. Modestly enough, Nature asks for no certificates, though by the depth of the ravine below the spring—(of course intended only as a place for cripples to throw away their crutches)—it is evident that she is laid out for as many cures, here, as are recorded of her sulphur sisters in Virginia.

As for me, (though it may sound something like a "sarsaparilla testimonial,") I daily put an incredulous leg out of bed, not seem-

ing to myself to be the same man whom I turned the key upon, the night before; and, if you have ever had this feeling of waking up for somebody else, and he a livelier fellow than yourself, you know the pace and pleasure of a Sharon convalescence. Let me add, for the information of invalids, that the inland mountain-air, as a change from the sea-board, probably goes for as much as the medicinal water, in this agency of healing. I felt my quick-silver of health ascending with every mile of up-hill from the Mohawk, and made my two best days of progress before resorting to the spring or bath. The air—now in midsummer—is, in all its changes, delicious and inspiriting. Everybody seems affected by its quality of exhilaration. The belles—(and there are a dozen, with as much beauty as Nature could give, without injustice to others, and two or three, who, fortunes, beauty and all, seem to be receiving the reward of virtue in some other existence—

Repented in some star, and this in Heaven—)

—the belles, I say, are genuine-ly merry, frolicking from morning till night as impulsively as shepherdesses in Arcadia; and, even in the faces of the Bostonians, of whom there are several families at Sharon, the indefinable *holier than-thou*-ativeness which is the phylactery of common wear in that exemplary city, relaxes, here, into a forgiving, if not into a partaking, acquiescence. For substantial good spirits, the altitude of this place seems to me to be very nicely chosen—neither so high as to listress delicate lungs by the thinness of the air, nor so low as to dip the skirts of its breezes into the languor of the valleys. I think I shall enlist with

the dandelions and become an annual at Sharon—thus, possibly, when in the "sere and yellow leaf," continuing ostensibly among the "greens."

I find I have transferred, since my return, a crown of belleship, of my unconscious bestowing. In one of my letters from hence, written before the commencement of the season, I mentioned an Indian girl, you will remember, as the "belle of the village." Each of the two families, residing here, has a French father and an Indian mother—each has nine children—and each a daughter at the age for a first love, and of considerable Indian beauty. Here the parallel ends, however, for Fortune has behaved with her usual caprice, and made one family aristocrat and the other plebeian—given one a handsome two-story house in the village, and left the other in a tent in the forest. Like whiter-skinned people under similar circumstances, the two families "do not visit;" but they both follow the profitable traffick of basket and fan making, and the two rival girls are the saleswomen for their respective parents. In a little grove on the hillside, between the two medicinal springs, sit, all day, at work, Nansha and Marie, with their prettily braided wares spread out before them, and a half dozen dandies lounging in the shade of each one's appropriated tree; and, if compliments and admiring looks could be unbraided from the basket-work, to whose making they have been the accompaniments, these girls might weigh theirs, I fancy, against the "gross receipts for the season" of any belle at Saratoga.

Which is the prettier of these two adolescent wicker-merchants, is a topic of conversation at Sharon, which occupies rather more

of the fashionable time and attention than either the French revolution or the cholera in Russia. As might be guessed from seeing what effect of *relievo* is produced on the beauty of city belles by having a rich papa in the background, Marie, the heiress of the two-story house, has larger audiences of young men, and probably sells many more baskets. She is better dressed and has more of what the country people call "manners" than her poorer rival Nansha, however—though she is just where Nature leaves her work (as a mantua-maker would say) "before taking out the bastings"—though the edges of her wheelbarrow-load of black hair are tanned yellow with the sun, and her fingers a little hardened with twisting the fibres of the ash—is, to my taste, the prettier girl. There is a struggle in her manners between French coquetry, and Indian reserve, that, as a style, would be worth transplanting to France, and perfecting by cultivation; and her eyes, to a connoisseur in those stereotyped commodities, would be valuable, as being the only ones of their kind, besides being glitteringly bright and fun-loving. My vote goes for Nansha; and it was Nansha of whom I bought my basket-work when here before, and whom, without mentioning her name, I alluded to in my letter as the "belle of the village." A copy of the paper containing this "nomination" was sent, however, to Marie, by one of her last year's admirers, and she was in quiet possession of the glory (oh newspaper print, thou great bestower with nothing to bestow!) on my recent return. Since setting the matter right, I understand from Nansha that Marie has indignantly sent back the paper to the gentleman in Albany who invested his sixpence in the blunder; and as, for the week past, I have been

unable to catch Marie's eye, in my stroll between sulphur and magnesia, I presume she resents, like a young author, an editorial lift given to a rival.

We have had two or three relays of "charming people" since I wrote to you, and if Sharon, as a fashionable resort, is not in the ascendant, (look out for a pun,) it is because mountains will not *rise* with the *leaven* of the better-*bred*. The general harmony and friendliness of the society, here, is spoken of as unusual—not a difference or jealousy having come to light, thus far in the season. Most of the families propose to remain till driven off by the mountain autumn, and, after the fatiguing gayeties of other watering-places, this will be a delightful retreat wherein to fortify for the dissipations of winter.

I go off, to-morrow, with my repaired timbers, to take a week's ramble among the rocks and waters of Trenton, and from thence, if Nature tells me anything worth repeating, (for there is no society there,) I will write you.

LETTER V.

TRENTON FALLS, August 14, 1848.

DEAR MORRIS: My date will mislead your "fond anticipations," probably; for, though I left Sharon, as you know, some days since, I have not been all this time steeping my brain-pores in the delicious beauty of Trenton. I did not come here directly. My stay at this loveliest of places was to be shared; and I went first to Albany to meet, and convoy hither, the present companion of my rambles. I have been here two days, it is true; and in that time one receives, at Trenton, a month's allowance of thought-yeast and pulse-quickening, and with some show of reason you might say "write!"—but Nature, in such prodigal bestowings of beauty as this, converts all the mind's issues into forgetful absorbents, and, with the ordinary communication 'twixt brain and pen thus justifiably cut off, one can do nothing with one's fingers' ends but take in pleasure, or, at most, write from impressions previously laid away.

I left Sharon with my timbers in good repair, and walked about at the stopping-places on the track, looking in at the windows of the other cars in search of acquaintances and handsome people, with a keen sense of privileges restored. Of the luxury of legs free of remainders, it takes a half-year's rheumatism to

teach the value—(ignorant mortal that you are, you healthy man!) —and, if life were not so short, or were it worth having at the period when we know the most, I should think a course of classic sicknesses might, with great propriety, form a part of a liberal education. For poets, indeed, long illnesses are the necessary apprenticeship—the nerves having comparatively no edge or susceptibility till impregnated with consciousness by pain—and what you and I might have been, my dear Morris, but for the stifling of our powers under an unfortunate youth of health, the Angel of un-used capabilities can alone tell us.

I passed a day in Albany, and, Charybdis of trunks and carpet bags as that place is to most people, you would have thought a detention there "a bore." Places, like people, however, may be made agreeable by a foregone enhancement, and, to me, the difference between a well man's day in Albany, (which it was,) and a sick man's day in a hotel, (which it might have been,) was almost as great as the difference between the breathing-room of a man of fashion and that of a man of genius—one having a place in society and the other a place in the world. So I pottered about Albany and looked in at the shop-windows, glanced under bonnets and between whiskers with the ever-renewing curiosity after new physiognomies, distributed my unexpressed likings and dislikings among the passers-by, looked no inkstand in the face from morn till night, (blessed *let-up*-itude to me!) and, from time to time, remembered that I was well. I have passed duller days in Paris and Constantinople.

Among our fellow-passengers up the Mohawk on the following morning, we had, in two adjoining seats, a very impressive contrast—an insane youth on his way to an asylum, and the mind

that has achieved the greatest triumph of intellect in our time, MORSE, of the electric telegraph, on an errand connected with the conveyance of thought by lightning. I sat nearly between them, and, with the incoherent mutterings of a lampless brain falling upon one ear, and the easy transitions from great truths to trifles which called upon all the attention of the other, I was in the place to philosophize upon the gift of reason, and the value of life with or without it. In the course of a brief argument on the expediency of some provision for putting an end to a defeated and hopeless existence, Mr. MORSE said that, ten years ago, under ill-health and discouragement, he would gladly have availed himself of any divine authorization for terminating a life of which the possessor was weary. The sermon that lay in this chance remark—the loss of priceless discovery to the world, and the loss of fame and fortune to himself, which would have followed a death thus prematurely self-chosen—is valuable enough, I think, to justify the invasion of the sacredness of private conversation which I commit by thus giving it to print. May some one, a-weary of the world, read it to his profit.

I have never seen the Mohawk to more advantage than on this day's journey along its banks, for not a breath of wind ruffled its surface, and every tree and upland within reach of the reflection, showed its counterpart with another sky below. With the usual regret that the dinner, twenty miles farther on, should draw us past the exquisite scenery of Little Falls, without the stop which is due to it, we rolled on to Utica, and farther than that, just now, your attention shall not be called upon to follow us. Adieu, and when you have read this letter, you may credit yourself with one sermon, if you like.

LETTER VI.

TRENTON FALLS, August 21, 1848.

DEAR MORRIS: In the long corridor of travel between New York and Niagara, this place, as you know, is a sort of alcove aside—a side-scene out of earshot of the crowd—a recess in a window, whither you draw a friend by the button for the sake of chit-chat at ease. It is fifteen miles off at right angles from the general procession, and must be done in vehicle hired at Utica for the purpose; so that, costing more time and money than a hundred miles in any other direction, it is voted a "don't pay" by promiscuous travellers, and its frequentation sifted accordingly. In gossiping with you about Trenton, therefore, I shall do it with cozy pen, the crowd out of the way, and we two snug and confidential. And, as poets and "literary men" are never poetical and literary for their own amusement, you will expect no "fine writing," and none but a spontaneous mention of the moon.

For my five dollars, I was not driven fast enough hither to *clear the dust*, metaphorically nor otherwise. I should recommend to you, or to any who come after, to include, in the bargain for a conveyance, the time in which the distance is to be done. It is a ride of no particular interest. With no intimation whatever of

the neighborhood of the Falls, we were driven up to the edge of a wood, after fifteen miles of dust and rough jolting, and landed at a house built for one man's wants and belongings—a house which the original forest still cloaks and umbrellas, leaving only its front portico, like a shirt-ruffle, open to the day, and which I pray, with all its homely inconveniences, may never be supplanted by a hotel of the class entitled to keep a gong. Oh, those chalky universes in rural places! What miles around, of green trees and tender grass, do they blaze out of all recognition with their unescapeable white-paint aggravations of sunshine, and their stretch of unmitigated colonnade! You may as well look at a star with a blazing candle in your eye, as enjoy a landscape in which one of these mountains of illuminated clapboard sits a-glare. It is the only happy alleviation of hotels of this degree, that they usually employ a band during the summer, and, for a slight consideration, you can hire the use of the long trumpet during the day, and, through it, look at some parts of the surrounding scenery with the house shut out of the prospect. Is it not a partial legislation, (*apropos,*) that distinguishes between nose and eye—protecting the first against any offending nuisance in public places, and leaving the latter and more delicate organ to all the dangers of ophthalmia by excessive white house? At Sharon, for example, any man may start without precaution to take a walk; but a man who should turn to come back without a pair of green goggles to shield his eyes from the glare of the hotel as he approaches it from any distance within three miles, must have let in less rubbish than I at those two complaining gateways of the brain, and have less dread of being left to the mercy of that merest of all beggars, the ear that can help itself

to nothing. There are satirists on the look-out for a national foible, and philanthropists on the look-out for a hobby—will not some one of these two classes entitle himself to the gratitude of scholars, by writing or preaching down, (or in some way "doing brown,") the *American propensity for white paint*—the excessive use of which, particularly in this climate of intense sunshine, is an eye-sore to taste as well as to overworked optics?

Mr. Moore, the landord at Trenton, is proposing to build a larger house for the accommodation of the public, but this sermon upon our Mont Blanc hotels, with their Dover Cliff porticoes, is not aimed at him. On subjects of taste he requires no counsel. The engravings a man hangs up in his parlors are a sufficient key to the degree of his refinement, and those which are visible through the soft *demi-jour* of the apartments in this shaded retreat, might all belong to a connoisseur in art, and are a fair exponent of the proprietor's perception of the beautiful. In more than one way, he is the right kind of man for the keeper of this loveliest of Nature's bailiwicks of scenery. On the night of our arrival I was lying awake, somewhere towards midnight, and watching from my window the sifting of moonlight through the woods with the stirring of the night air, when the low undertone of the falls was suddenly varied with a strain of exquisite music. It seemed scarcely a tune, but, with the richest fullness of volume, one lingering and dreamy note melted into another, as if it were the voluntary of a player who unconsciously touched the keys as an accompaniment to his melancholy. What with the place and time, and my ignorance that there was an instrument of this character in the house, I was a good deal surprised, but, before making up my mind as to what it could be, I was

"helped over the stile" into dreamland, and made no inquiry till the next morning at breakfast. The player was our landlord, Mr. Moore, who, thus, when his guests are gone to bed, steals an hour of leisure from the night, and, upon a fine organ which stands in one of the inner parlors of his house, plays with admirable taste and execution.

In an introduction of Mr. Moore to you as "mine host," however, mention must needs be made of his skill in an art meaner than music, yet far more essential—the art of pie-making and pudding-ry. Nowhere, (short of Felix's in the Passage Panorama at Paris,) will you eat such delicate and curious varieties of pastry as at the hostelry of romantic Trenton. Those fingers that wander over the keys of the solemn organ with such poetical dreaminess, and turn over a zoophyte or trilobite with appreciative cognizance, (for he is a mineralogist, too, and has collected a curious cabinet of specimens from the gorges of the Falls,) are daily employed in preparing, for the promiscuous "sweet tooth" of the public, pies worthy of being confined to Heliogabalus and the ladies. The truth is, that, were human allotments as nicely apportioned, and placed in as respective an each-other-age as the ingredients of Mr. Moore's pies, Mr. Moore would never have been by trade a baker. Happy they, notwithstanding, to whom the world says, "friend, go up higher!" though in this case it would be only in intellectual gradation, as the calling of hotel-keeper is, in our country, half a magistracy, from the importance and responsibility of its duties, and one which (by public consent daily strengthening) demands and befits a gentleman. Mr. Moore, (to finish his biography,) came here twenty years ago, to enjoy the scenery of which he had heard so much; and, getting a

severe fall in climbing the rocks, was for some time confined to his bed at the hotel, then kept by Mr. Sherman, of trout-fishing memory. The kind care with which he was treated resulted in an attachment for one of the daughters of the family, his present wife, and, relinquishing his bakery in New York, he came back—heart, taste and trade—wedded his fair nurse and Trenton for the remainder of his life, and is now the owner and host of the very loveliest scenery-haunt in all our picturesque country.

Of course you are impatient for me and my pen to get to the Falls—but that deep-down autopsy of Nature, with its disembowelings of strata laid down before the time of Adam, (according to Professor Agassiz,) is a solemn place and topic, and I must talk of such trifles as modern men and their abiding-places, while my theme dates from this side of the Deluge. I am not sure that I shall say anything about the Falls, in this letter. Let me see, first, what else I have to tell you of the manner of life at the hotel.

As I said before, the company of strangers at Trenton is made somewhat select, by the expense and difficulty of access. Most, who come, stay two or three days; but there are usually boarders here for a longer time, and, at present, three or four families of most cultivated and charming people, who form a nucleus of agreeable society to which any attractive transient visitor easily attaches an acquaintance. Nothing could well be more agreeable than the footing upon which these chance-met residents and their daily accessions of new comers pass their evenings and take strolls up the ravine together; and, for those who love country air and romantic rambles without "dressing for dinner" or waltzing by a band, this is a "place to stay." These are not the most numer-

ous frequenters of Trenton, however. It is a very popular place of resort from every village within thirty miles, and, from ten in the morning till four in the afternoon, there is gay work with the country girls and their beaux—swinging under the trees, strolling about in the woods near the house, bowling, singing and dancing —at all of which, (owing, perhaps, to a certain gipsy-ish promiscuosity of my nature that I never could aristocrify by the keeping of better company,) I am delighted to be at least a looker-on. The average number of these visitors from the neighborhood is forty or fifty a day, so that breakfast and tea are the nearest approach to "dress meals"—the dinner, though profuse and dainty in its fare, being eaten in what is commonly thought to be rather "mixed society." I am inclined to think that, from French intermixture, or some other cause, the inhabitants of this region are a little peculiar in their manners. There is an unconsciousness, or carelessness of others' observation and presence, that I have, hitherto, only seen abroad. We have had songs, duetts and choruses sung here by village girls, within the last few days, in a style that drew all in the house to listen very admiringly, and even the ladies all agree that there have been extremely pretty girls, day after day, among them. I find they are Fourierites to the extent of common hair-brush and other personal furniture—walking into anybody's room in the house for the temporary repairs which belles require on their travels, and availing themselves of whatever was therein, with a simplicity perhaps a little transcendental. I had obtained the extra privilege, for myself, of a small dressing-room apart, in which, I presumed, the various trowsers and other merely masculine belongings would be protective scarecrow sufficient to keep out these daily female invaders;

but, walking in yesterday, I found my combs and brushes in active employ, and two very tidy looking girls making themselves at home without shutting the door, and no more disturbed by my *entrée* than if I had been a large male fly. As friends were waiting, I apologized for intruding long enough to take a pair of boots out from under their protection, but my presence was evidently no interruption. One of the girls, (a tall figure, like a woman in two syllables connected by a hyphen at the waist,) continued to look at the back of her dress in the glass, *a la Venus Callipige*, and the other went on threading her most prodigal *chevelure* with my doubtless very embarrassed though unresisting hair-brush, and so I abandoned the field, as I was of course expected to do. As they did not shut the door after my retreat, I presume that, by the code of morals and manners hereabouts, a man's pre-occupancy of a room simply entitles him to come and go at pleasure—the unoccupied portions and conveniences of the apartment open, meantime, to feminine availment and partaking. I do not know that they would go the length of "fraternizing" one's tooth-brush, but, with the exception of locking up that rather confidential article, I give in to the customs of the country, and have ever since left open door to the ladies—which "severe trial" please mention, if convenient, in my biography.

If you have ever "sung in the choir," my dear Morris, you know how difficult it is to stop before the organ leaves off, and, with the sound of running water, which is the eternal accompaniment here, I find one keeps doing whatever one is about—drinking tea or drizzling ink—with pertinacious continuance. Hence this very long letter. The atmosphere seems otherwise favorable to writing, however, for the front of the house is covered with

inscriptions of wit and sentiment—and with one specimen I will make an effort to taper off into an adieu. In a neat hand, a man records the arrival of himself "*and servant,*" below which is the following inscription:—

"G. Squires, wife and two babies. *No servant,* owing to the hardness of the times."

And under this, again:—

"G. W. Douglas *and servant. No wife and babies,* owing to the hardness of the times."

With this instructive example of selective economy, I call your admiring attention to the forbearingly practical character of this letter, written at Trenton and in the full of the moon, and remain, my dear Morris, Yours, &c.

LETTER VII.

TRENTON FALLS, August 28, 1848.

ONE of the most embarrassing of dilemmas, my dear Morris, in addressing either talk or letter to a man, is not to know the amount of his information on the subject in hand. I am to write to you from Trenton—a place of romantic scenery and gay resort, and easy enough to gossip about, if that were all. But it is, besides, the spot where prostrate Mother Earth has been cleft open to the spine, more neatly than anywhere else, and where the deposits on the edges of her ribs show what she had to digest, for centuries before the creation of man. Here I am, therefore, this shirt-sleeve summer noon—as full of wonder and impressions of beauty as my poor brain-jug can any way hold without spilling—but, query before I pour out:—how much knowledge of the spot have you drank already, and do you want the dregs at the bottom, or only the bubble at the brim? At what definite point of time (within a century or so) shall we take up the news of this watering-place, whose book of arrivals, (legible at this moment by the geologist,) extends back to, certainly, long before the planting of the forbidden tree, and, possibly, to a date anterior to the fall of Lucifer? America (Agassiz and other

men of science now agree) was stocked and planted long before the emergence of Europe and Asia from the bed of the ocean. It was an old continent when Eden first came to light; and if Adam's early education had not been neglected, he would probably have made the tour of the United States, (*then* "the old country,") and taken Trenton in his way. Now, my Morris, where shall we strike in, to the long line of customers at this pleasant place? Shall I talk to you of the trilobites and zoophytes who came here a quarter of an eternity ago, or of the French Baron and the son of an English statesman, who arrived here to-day, August 10, 1848? Will you have Trenton shown up in Adam and Eve's time, or in the time of Baron de Trobriand and Mr. Stanley? Of this long established theatre of Nature, shall I paragraph the "stock company" or the "stars"—the fossil remains of time out of mind, or the belles and beaux who, at this particular moment of forever and ever, are flirting away the noon upon the portico? If we could "vote in" our own fossil representatives, by the way—choose the specimens of our race, I mean, who are to be dug out and admired in future ages—there is a bride among the company below, whose election would, I think, be unanimous, and whose form, (if petrified in marble without a flaw and brought to light a thousand years hence as a zoolite of the eighteenth century,) would assuredly make those unborn geologists sigh not to have lived in *our* days of woman. She is indeed a ch———, but, for further particulars, see postscript.

I was here twenty years ago, but the fairest things slip easiest out of the memory, and I had half forgotten Trenton. To tell the truth, I was a little ashamed, to compare the faded and shabby

picture of it, in my mind, with the reality before me; and, if the waters of the Falls had been, by any likelihood, the same that flowed over when I was here before, I should have looked them in the face, I think, with something of the embarrassment with which one meets, half-rememberingly, after years of separation, the ladies one has vowed to love forever. How is it with you, my dear friend? Have you, as a general thing, been constant to waterfalls, &c., &c., &c.?

The peculiarity of Trenton Falls, I fancy, consists a good deal in the space in which you are compelled to see them. You walk a few steps from the hotel, through the wood, and come to a descending staircase of a hundred steps, the different bends of which are so overgrown with wild shrubbery, that you cannot see the ravine till you are fairly upon its rocky floor. Your path hence, up to the first fall, is along a ledge cut out of the base of the cliff that overhangs the torrent; and when you get to the foot of the descending sheet, you find yourself in very close quarters with a cataract—rocky walls all around you—and the appreciation of power and magnitude, perhaps, somewhat heightened by the confinement of the place—as a man would have a much more realizing sense of a live lion, shut up with him in a basement parlor, than he would of the same object, seen from an elevated and distant point of view.

The usual walk (through this deep cave, open at the top) is about half a mile in length, and its almost subterranean river, in that distance, plunges over four precipices in exceedingly beautiful cascades. On the successive rocky terraces between the falls, the torrent takes every variety of rapids and whirlpools, and, perhaps, in all the scenery of the world, there is no river which, in the

same space, presents so many of the various shapes and beauties of running and falling water. The Indian name of the stream, (the Kanata, which means the *amber river*,) expresses one of its peculiarities, and, probably from the depth of shade cast by the two dark and overhanging walls 'twixt which it flows, the water is everywhere of a peculiarly rich lustre and color, and, in the edges of one or two of the cascades, as yellow as gold. Artists, in drawing this river, fail, somehow, in giving the impression of *deep-down-itude* which is produced by the close approach of the two lofty walls of rock, capped by the overleaning woods, and with the sky apparently resting, like a ceiling, upon the leafy architraves. It conveys, somehow, the effect of a *subter*-natural river—on a different level, altogether, from our common and above-ground water-courses. If there were truly, as the poets say figuratively, "worlds *within* worlds," this would look as if an earthquake had cracked open the outer globe, and exposed, through the yawning fissure, one of the rivers of the globe below —the usual underground level of "down among the dead men," being, as you walk upon its banks, between you and the daylight.

Considering the amount of surprise and pleasure which one feels in a walk up the ravine at Trenton, it is remarkable how little one finds to say about it, the day after. Is it that mere scenery, without history, is enjoyable without being suggestive? or, amid the tumult of the rushing torrent at one's feet, is the milk of thought too much agitated for the cream to rise? I fancied yesterday, as I rested on the softest rock I could find at the upper end of the ravine, that I should tumble out a letter to-day, with the ideas pitching forth like drift-logs over a waterfall; yet my memory has nothing in it to-day but the rocks and rapids it

took in—the talent, wrapped in its napkin of delight, remaining in unimproved *statu-quo*-sity. One certainly gets the impression, while the sight and hearing are so overwhelmed, that one's mind is famously at work, and that we shall hear from it to-morrow; but it is Jean Paul, I think, who says that "the mill makes the most noise when there is no grist in the hopper." I have a couple more days to stay here, however, and, meantime, I will leave these first impressions in incubation. Look for one more letter from Trenton, therefore, for which I will borrow an hour or two of the morning of leaving.

LETTER VIII.

TRENTON FALLS, August —, 1848.

THAT *very* "American swallow," which, the zoologists tell us, "devours fifteen hundred caterpillars a week, and performs every action on the wing except incubation and sleeping," should establish a dépôt for the sale of his feathers—for, with the quill of no slower bird can a man comfortably write, in the act of mental digestion and during bodily travel. If you find my style jerk-y and abrupt, and my adjoining chambers of thought, as they say in conchology, without "the connecting siphuncle" which should make the transition as velvet-y to the reader's foot as the carpet from a boudoir to a lady's chamber, let the defects rather make you wonder that I wrote at all than that I wrote no better. To feel, and tell of it while you feel, is, (besides,) as lovers and writers alike know, very difficult business — notwithstanding Shakspeare's doctrine that "every time serves for the matter that is then born in it." And so for another of those fatal too-quick-ities, for all manner of which, it seems to me, life is full of irresistible inducement.

It is not often, my dear Morris, that we have found occasion to complain of woman's performance of her part as the sex orna-

mental. In most times and places, she refreshingly varies the dullness of the picture of life, dressing for her place as appropriately as do the lilies and roses, and deserving, like them, (of course,) to toil not, neither should she spin. To be ornamental is to be useful enough. Charmingly as women become most situations in which we see them, however, they, by the present fashion, dress most tamely for the places where striking costume is most needed. I felt this quite sensibly yesterday. From my seat under a tree, where I dreamed away the delicious summer forenoon, I had the range of the ravine; and everybody who passed through made part of my landscape, for, at least, half an hour of their climbings and haltings. You know how much any romantic scene is heightened in its effect by human figures. Every new group changed and embellished the glorious combination of rock, foliage and water below me, and I studied their dresses and attitudes as you would criticise them in a picture. The men with their two sticks of legs, and angular hats, looked abominably, of course. I was glad when they were out of the perspective. But the ladies of each party, with their flowing skirts, veils lifted by the wind, picturesque bonnets and parasols, were charming outlines as heighteners to the effect, and would have been all that was wanted to render it perfect, only that they were clad in the colors of the rock behind them—in slate-colored riding dresses, without a single exception, and in bonnets and ribbons adapted, with the same economy, to the dust of the road. In the course of the morning, one lady came along, apparently an invalid, resting at every spot where she could find a seat, and, for her use, the gentleman who was with her carried a *crimson shawl*, flung over his shoulder. You would need to be an artist to

understand how much that one shawl embellished the scene. It concentrated the light of the whole ravine, and, though there were parties of pretty girls above and below, and new comers every two or three minutes, I found my eye fastened on this red shawl and its immediate neighborhood, during the whole time of its remaining within view. I made as vigorous a vow as the heavenly languor of the atmosphere would sustain, to address, through the Home Journal, an appeal to the ladies of our land of beauty, imploring them to carry, at least, a scarf over the arm—white, red, or blue—when they mingle in the landscapes of our romantic resorts—thus supplying all that is wanted to such glorious pictures as Trenton and Niagara; while, at the same time, they thus, artistically as well as justly, become the luminous centre to which the remainder of the scene is entirely subservient. Do you not see, Morris, that, if a lady in a blue travelling-habit had chanced to have passed up the ravine during my look-out from this point of perspective, Trenton Falls would have seemed to me to be only an enhancement of her figure and appearance—secondary altogether to her primary and concentrating impression on the eye. Ladies should avail themselves of such opportunities, even at some more pains and expense; for, of all the chance obstacles to appreciation of female beauty or style, the want of suitable background and surroundings is the most frequent and effectual.

And, *apropos* of seeing fine things to advantage, why could not *you*, my fine Brigadier, give us a *tableau vivant* at Trenton—ordering some of your companies of red-coats to campaign it for a week at the Falls, and let us see how the "war of waters" would look, thundering down upon the rocks amid flags and uniforms? Why, it would be one of the most brilliant shows possible to con-

trive—a putting of Nature into holiday costume, as it were—and I scarce know which would more embellish the other, brigade or cataract. On the platform above each of the four falls there is room enough to encamp two or three companies in tents, and, fancy looking down the gorge from the summit of the cliffs above, and seeing these successive terraces, with waterfall and military array, precipices and wild forest, in picturesque and magnificent combination! The fact is, my sodger, that the usual habiliments of mankind are made to harmonize with brick walls and dirty streets; and, when we come into Nature's gorgeous palaces of scenery, looking the "forked radishes" that we are, there is no resisting the conviction that we are either wofully out of place, or not dressed with suitable regard to the local pomp and circumstance. Suggest to your hatter, to invent, at least, a *sombrero,* and advertise it as the thing which etiquette requires should be worn at Niagara and Trenton, instead of a hat with a petty rim. There would be an obvious propriety in the fashion. Where Nature appears in her waterfall epaulettes, armor of rocks and dancing plumes of foliage, surely there should be some manner of corresponding toggery wherewith to wait upon her.

We have had the full of the moon and a cloudless sky for the last two or three nights, and of course we have walked the ravine till the "small hours," seeing with wonder the transforming effects of moonlight and its black shadows on the falls and precipices. I have no idea (you will be glad to know) of trying to reproduce these sublimities on paper—at least not with my travelling stock of verbs and adjectives. To "sandwich the moon in a muffin," one must have time and a ladder of dictionaries. But one or two effects struck me which, perhaps, are worth briefly

naming, and I will throw into the lot a poetical figure, which you may use in your next song—giving credit to your "distinguished fellow-citizen," the Moon, for the original suggestion.

The fourth fall, (or the one which is flanked by the ruins of a saw-mill,) is perhaps a hundred feet across; and its curve over the upper rock and its break upon the lower one, form two parallel lines, the water everywhere falling the same distance, with the evenness of an artificial cascade. The stream not being very full, just now, it came over, in twenty or thirty places, thicker than elsewhere; and the effect, from a distance, as the moonlight lay full upon it, was that of twenty or thirty immovable marble columns, connected by transparent curtains of falling lace, and with bases in imitation of foam. Now it struck me that this might suggest a new and fanciful order of architecture, suitable at least to the structure of green-houses, the glass roofs of which are curved over and slope to the ground with very much the contour of a waterfall. Please mention this to Downing, the next time you meet him, and he'll mention it, (for the use of some happy, extravagant dog, who can afford a whim or so,) in his next book on Rural Architecture.

Subterranean as this foaming river looks by day, it looks like a river in cloud-land by night. The side of the ravine which is in shadow, is one undistinguishable mass of black, with its wavy upper edge in strong relief against the sky, and, as the foaming stream catches the light from the opposite and moonlit side, it is outlined distinctly on its bed of darkness, and seems winding its way between hills and clouds, half black, half luminous. Below, where all is deep shadow except the river, you might fancy it a silver mine laid open to your view amid subterranean darkness by

the wand of an enchanter, or, (if you prefer a military trope, my dear General,) a long white plume laid lengthwise between the ridges of a cocked hat.

And now—for the poetical similitude I promised you—please put yourself opposite the biggest cataract of all, the lowest one, where the whole body of the river is forced into the narrowing approach to a precipice, and pitches into the foamy gulf below, like the overthrow of Lucifer and his hosts. From one cause and another, this is the angriest downfall of waters possible; and the rock, over which it tumbles, here makes a curve, and comes round with a battlemented projection, looking the cataract full in the face. As we stood gazing at this, last night, a little after midnight, the moon threw the shadow of the rock, slantwise, across the face of the fall. I found myself insensibly watching to see whether the delicate outline of the shadow would not vary. There it lay, still as the shade of a church-window across a marble slab on the wall, drawing its fine line over the most frenzied tumult of the lashed and agonized waters, and dividing whatever leaped across it, foam, spray or driving mist, with invariable truthfulness to the rock that lay behind. Now, my song-maker, if you ever have a great man to make famous—a hero who unflinchingly represents a great principle amid the raging opposition, hatred and malice of mankind—there is your similitude! *Calm as the shadow of a rock across the foam of a cataract,* would be a neat thing to "salt down" for CALHOUN or VAN BUREN—(whichever holds out best or first wants it)—and it would go off, in one of your speeches, like a Paixhan gun. I tied a knot in the end of my cravat, standing at the Fall, to remember it for you.

Baron de Trobriand has been here, for the last day or two, as I mentioned in my last letter. I had been reading, on the road, a French novel of which he is the author, ("*Les Gentilshommes de l'Ouest,*") and I am amused to see how he carries out, in his impulsive and enthusiastic way of enjoying scenery, the impression you get of his character from his buoyant and brilliant style of writing. We have not seen him at a meal since he has been here. After one look at the Falls, he came back and made a foray upon the larder, got a tin kettle in which he packed the simple provender he might want, and was off with his portfolio to sketch and ramble out the day, impatient alike of the restraints of meals or companions. He returns at night with his slight and elegant features burnt with the sun, wet to the knees with wading the rapids, and quite overdone with fatigue, and rejoins the gay but more leisurely and luxurious party with which he travels. Looking down from one of the cliffs yesterday afternoon, I saw him hard at work, ankle-deep in water, bringing pieces of rock and building a causeway across the shallows of the stream—to induce the ladies to come to the edge of the Falls, otherwise inaccessible. He has made one or two charming sketches of the ravine, being, as you know, an admirable artist. There is an infusion of joyousness and impulse, as well as of genius, in the noble blood of this gentleman who has come to live among us; and, I trust, that, with the increase of our already large French population, he will think it worth while to graft himself on our periodical literature, and give it an effervescence that it needs. You remember his gay critiques of the Opera last winter.

I meant to have described to you the path through the forest

along the edge of the cliff overhanging the ravine—its beauty by moonlight, with its fire-fly lamps and locust hymns—the lunar rainbow visible from one of its eyries—and other stuff for poetry with which I mentally filled my pockets in strolling about; but my letter is long. Adieu.

A PLAIN MAN S LOVE:

A STORY WITHOUT INCIDENT,

WRITTEN IN THE LEISURE OF ILLNESS.

A PLAIN MAN'S LOVE.

CHAPTER I.

THAT the truths arrived at by the unaccredited short road of "magnetism" had better be stripped of their technical phraseology, and set down as the gradual discoveries of science and experience, is a policy upon which acts many a sagacious believer in "clairvoyance." Doubtless, too, there is, here and there, a wise man, who is glad enough to pierce, with the eyes of an incredible agent, the secrets about him, and let the world give him credit, by whatever name they please, for the superior knowledge of which he silently takes advantage. I should be behind the time, if I had not sounded, to the utmost of my ability and opportunity, the depth of this new medium. I have tried it on grave things and trifles. If the unveiling which I am about to record were of more use to myself than to others, perhaps I should adopt the policy of which I have just spoken, and give the result, simply as my own shrewd lesson, learned in reading the female heart. But the truths I unfold will instruct the few who need and can appreciate them, while the whole subject is not of general importance enough to bring down cavillers upon the credibility of their source. I thus get rid of a very detestable, though sometimes necessary, evil, ("*qui nescit dissimulare nescit vivere*," says the Latin sage,) that of shining by any light that is not absolutely my own.

I am a very plain man in my personal appearance—*so* plain that a common observer, if informed that there was a woman who had a fancy for my peculiar type, would wonder that I was not thankfully put to rest, for life, as a seeker after love—a second miracle of the kind being a very slender probability. It is not in beauty that the taste for beauty alone resides, however. In early youth my soul, like the mirror of Cydippe, retained, with enamored fidelity, the image of female loveliness copied in the clear truth of its appreciation; and the passion for it had become, insensibly, the thirst of my life, before I thought of it as more than an intoxicating study. To be beloved—myself beloved—by a creature made in one of the diviner moulds of woman, was, however, a dream that shaped itself into waking distinctness at last; and, from that hour, I took up the clogging weight of personal disadvantages, to which I had hitherto unconsciously been chained, and bore it heavily in the race which the well-favored ran as eagerly as I.

I am not to recount, here, the varied experiences of my search, the world over, after beauty and its smile. It is a search on which all travellers are more than half bent, let them name as they please their professed errand in far countries. The coldest scholar in art will better remember a living face, of a new cast of expression, met in the gallery of Florence, than the best work of Michael Angelo, whose genius he has crossed an ocean to study; and a fair shoulder crowded against the musical pilgrim, in the Capella Sistina, will be taken surer into his soul's inner memory, than the best outdoing of "the sky-lark taken up into heaven," by the ravishing reach of the *Miserere*. Is it not true?

There can hardly be, now, I think, a style of female beauty of which I have not appreciated the meaning and comparative enchantment, nor a degree of that sometimes more effective thing than beauty itself—its expression breathing through features otherwise unlovely—that I have not approached near enough to weigh and store truthfully in remembrance. The taste forever refines, in the study of woman. We return to what, with immature eye, we at first rejected; we intensify, immeasurably, our worship of the few who wear on their foreheads the star of supreme loveliness, confessed pure and perfect by all beholders alike; we detect it under surfaces which become transparent only with tenderness or enthusiasm; we separate the work of Nature's material chisel, from the resistless and warm expansion of the soul swelling its proportion to fill out the shape it is to tenant hereafter. Led by the purest study of true beauty, the eager mind passes on, from the shrine where it lingered, to the next of whose greater brightness it becomes aware: and this is the secret of one kind of "inconstancy in love," which should be named apart from the variableness of those seekers of novelty, who, from unconscious self-contempt, value nothing they have had the power to win.

An unsuspected student of beauty, I passed years of loiterings in the living galleries of Europe and Asia, and, like self-punishing misers in all kinds of amassings, stored up boundlessly more than, with the best trained senses, I could have found the life to enjoy. Of course, I had a first advantage, of dangerous facility, in my unhappy plainness of person—the alarm-guard, that surrounds every beautiful woman in every country of the world, setting sleep, at *my* approach, the cautionary reserve which pre-

sents bayonet so promptly to the good-looking. Even with my worship avowed, and the manifestation of grateful regard which a woman of fine quality always returns for elevated and unexacting admiration, I was still left with such privilege of access as is granted to the family-gossip, or to an innocuous uncle; and it is of such a passion, rashly nurtured under this protection of an improbability, that I propose to tell the *inner* story.

CHAPTER II.

I was at the Baths of Lucca during a season made gay by the presence of a large proportion of the agreeable and accessible court of Tuscany. The material for my untiring study was in abundance, yet it was all of the worldly character which the attractions of the place would naturally draw together, and my homage had but a choice between differences of display in the one pursuit of admiration. In my walks through the romantic mountain-paths of the neighborhood, and along the banks of the deep-down river that threads the ravine above the village, I had often met, meantime, a lady accompanied by a well-bred and scholar-like looking man; and, though she invariably dropped her veil at my approach, her admirable movement, as she walked, or stooped to pick a flower, betrayed that conscious possession of beauty and habitual confidence in her own grace and elegance, which assured me of attractions worth taking trouble to know. By one of those "unavoidable accidents" which any respectable guardian angel will contrive, to oblige one, I was a visitor to the gentleman and lady—father and daughter—soon after my curiosity had framed the desire; and in her I found a marvel of beauty, from which I

looked in vain for my usual escape—that of placing the ladder of my heart against a loftier and fairer.

Mr. Wangrave was one of those English gentlemen, who would not exchange the name of an ancient and immemorially wealthy family, for any title that their country could give them, and he used this shield of modest honor simply to protect himself in the enjoyments of habits, freed, as far as refinement and culture could do it, from the burthens and intrusions of life above and below him. He was ceaselessly educating himself—like a man whose whole life was only too brief an apprenticeship to a higher existence—and, with an invalid, but intellectual and lovely wife, and a daughter who seemed unconscious that she could love, and who kept gay pace with her youthful-hearted father in his lighter branches of knowledge, his family sufficed to itself, and had determined so to continue while abroad. The society of no Continental watering-place has a very good name, and they were there for climate and seclusion. With two ladies, who seemed to occupy the places and estimation of friends, (but who were probably the paid nurse and companion to the invalid,) and a kind-hearted old secretary to Mr. Wangrave, whose duties consisted in being as happy as he possibly could be, their circle was large enough, and it contained elements enough—except only, perhaps, the *réveille* that was wanting for the apparently slumbering heart of Stephania.

A month after my first call upon the Wangraves, I joined them on their journey to Vallambrosa, where they proposed to take refuge from the sultry coming of the Italian autumn. My happiness would not have been arranged after the manner of this world's happiness, if I had been the only addition tc their party

up the mountain. They had received, with open arms, a few days before leaving Lucca, a young man from the neighborhood of their own home, and who, I saw with half a glance, was the very eidolon and type of what Mr. Wangrave would desire as a fitting match for his daughter. From the allusions to him that had preceded his coming, I had learned that he was the heir to a brilliant fortune, and was coming to his old friends to be congratulated on his appointment to a captaincy in the Queen's Guards —as pretty a case of an "irresistible" as could well have been compounded for expectation. And when he came—the absolute model of a youth of noble beauty—all frankness, good manners, joyousness, and confidence—I summoned courage to look alternately at Stephania and him, and the hope, the daring hope that I had never yet named to myself, but which was already master of my heart and its every pulse and capability, dropped prostrate and lifeless in my bosom. If he did but offer her the life-minute of love, of which I would give her, it seemed to me, for the same price, an eternity of countless existences—if he should but give her a careless word, where I could wring a passionate utterance out of the aching blood of my very heart—she must needs be his. She would be a star, else, that would resign an orbit in the fair sky, to illumine a dim cave; a flower that would rather bloom on a bleak moor than in the garden of a king—for, with such crushing comparisons did I irresistibly see myself, as I remembered my own shape and features, and my far humbler fortunes than his, standing in her presence beside him.

Oh! how everything contributed to enhance the beauty of that young man! How the mellow and harmonizing tenderness of the light of the Italian sky gave sentiment to his oval cheek, depth to

his gray-blue eye, meaning to their overfolding and thick-fringed lashes! Whatever he said with his finely-cut lips, was *looked* into twenty times its meaning by the beauty of their motion in that languid atmosphere—an atmosphere seemed only breathed for his embellishment and Stephania's. Every posture he took seemed a happy and rare accident, which a painter should have been there to see. The sunsets, the moonlight, the chance background and foreground, of vines and rocks—everything seemed in conspiracy to heighten his effect, and make of him a faultless picture of a lover.

"Everything," did I say? Yes, *even myself*—for my uncomely face and form were such a foil to his beauty as a skilful artist would have introduced to heighten it when all other art was exhausted, and every one saw it except Stephania; and little they knew how, with perceptions far quicker than theirs, I *felt* their recognition of this, in the degree of softer kindness in which they unconsciously spoke to me. They pitied me, and without recognizing their own thought—for it was a striking instance of the difference in the gifts of Nature—one man looking scarce possible to love, and beside him, another, of the same age, to whose mere first-seen beauty, without a word from his lips, any heart would seem unnatural not to leap in passionate surrender.

We were the best of sudden friends, Palgray and I. He, like the rest, walked only the outer vestibule of the sympathies viewlessly deepening and extending, hour by hour, in that frank and joyous circle. The interlinkings of soul, which need no language, and which go on, whether we will or no, while we talk with friends, are so strangely unthought of, by the careless and happy! He saw in me no counter-worker to his influence. I was to him

but a well-bred and extremely plain man, who tranquilly submitted to forego all the first prizes of life, content if I could contribute to society in its unexcited voids, and receive in return only the freedom of its outer intercourse, and its friendly esteem. But, oh! it was not in the same world that he and I knew Stephania. He approached her from the world in whose most valued excellencies, beauty and wealth, he was pre-eminently gifted—I, from the viewless world, in which I had, at least, more skill and knowledge. In the month that I had known her before he came, I had sedulously addressed myself to a character within her, of which Palgray had not even a conjecture; and there was but one danger of his encroachment on the ground I had gained—her imagination might supply, in him, the noble temple of soul-worship, which was still unbuilt, and which would never be builded, except by pangs such as he was little likely to feel in the undeepening channel of happiness. He did not notice that *I* never spoke to her in the same key of voice to which the conversation of others was attuned. He saw not that, while she turned to *him* with a smile as a preparation to listen, she heard *my* voice as if her attention had been arrested by distant music—with no change in her features except a look more earnest. She would have called *him* to look with her at a glowing sunset, or to point out a new comer in the road from the village; but, if the moon had gone suddenly into a cloud and saddened the face of the landscape, or if the wind had sounded mournfully through the trees, as she looked out upon the night, she would have spoken of that, first to *me*.

CHAPTER III.

I am flying over the track of what was to me a torrent—outlining its course by alighting upon, here and there, a point where it turned or lingered.

The reader has been to Vallambrosa—if not once as a pilgrim, at least often with writers of travels in Italy. The usages of the convent are familiar to all memories—their lodging of the gentlemen of a party in cells of their own monastic privilege, and giving, to the ladies, less sacred hospitalities, in a secular building of meaner and unconsecrated architecture. (So, oh, mortifying brotherhood, you shut off your only chance of entertaining angels unaware!)

Not permitted to eat with the ladies while on the holy mountain, Mr. Wangrave and his secretary, and Palgray and I, fed at the table with the aristocratic monks—(for they are the aristocrats of European holiness, these monks of Vallambrosa.) It was somewhat a relief to me to be separated with my rival from the party in the feminine refectory, even for the short space of a meal-time; for the all-day suffering of presence with an unconscious trampler on my heart-strings, and in circumstances where all the triumphs were his own, were more than my intangible hold upon hope could well enable me to bear. I was happiest, therefore, when I was out of the presence of her, to be near whom was all for which my life was worth having; and when we sat down at the long and bare table, with the thoughtful and ashen-cowled company, sad as I was, it was an opiate sadness—a suspension from self-mastery, under torture which others took to be pleasure.

The temperature of the mountain-air was just such as to invite us to never enter doors except to eat and sleep; and, breakfasting at convent-hours, we passed the long day in rambling up the ravines and through the sombre forests, drawing, botanizing, and conversing in group around some spot of exquisite natural beauty and all of the party, myself excepted, supposing it to be the undissenting, common desire to contrive opportunity for the love-making of Palgray and Stephania. And, bitter though it was, in each particular instance, to accept a hint from one and another, and stroll off, leaving the confessed lovers alone, by some musical waterfall, or in the secluded and twilight dimness of some curve in an overhanging ravine—places where only to breathe is to love—I still felt an instinctive prompting to rather anticipate than wait for these reminders, she alone knowing what it cost me to be without her in that delicious wilderness; and Palgray, as well as I could judge, having a mind out of harmony with both the wilderness and her.

He loved her—loved her as well as most women need to be, or know that they can be, loved. But he was too happy, too prosperous, too universally beloved, to love well. He was a man, with all his beauty, more likely to be fascinating to his own sex than to hers—for the women who love best, do not love in the character they live in; and his out-of-doors heart, whose joyfulness was so contagious, and whose bold impulses were so manly and open, contented itself with gay homage, and left, unplummeted, the sweetest as well as deeepest wells of the thoughtful tenderness of woman.

To most observers, Stephania Wangrave would have seemed only born to be gay—the mere habit of being happy having

made its life-long imprint upon her expression of countenance, and all of her nature, that would be legible to a superficial reader, being brought out by the warm translucence of her smiles. But, while I had seen this, in the first hour of my study of her, I was too advanced in my knowledge (of such works of nature as encroach on the models of heaven) not to know this to be a light veil over a picture of melancholy meaning. Sadness was the tone of her mind's inner coloring. Tears were the subterranean river upon which her soul's bark floated with the most loved freight of her thought's accumulation—the sunny waters of joy, where alone she was thought to voyage, being the tide on which her heart embarked no venture, and which seemed to her triflingly garish, and even profaning to the hallowed delicacy of the inner nature.

It was so strange to me that Palgray did not see this through every lineament of her marvellous beauty! There was a glow under her skin, but no color—an effect of paleness, fair as the lotus-leaf, but warmer and brighter, and which came through the alabaster fineness of the grain, like something the eye cannot define, but which we know, by some spirit-perception, to be the effluence of purer existence—the breathing through, as it were, of the luminous tenanting of an angel. To this glowing paleness, with golden hair, I never had seen united any but a disposition of predominant melancholy; and it seemed to me dull indeed, otherwise to read it. But there were other betrayals of the same inner nature of Stephania. Her lips, cut with the fine tracery of the pencilling upon a tulip cup, were of a slender and delicate fullness, expressive of a mind which took—(of the senses)—only so much life as would hold down the spirit during its probation; and when

this spiritual mouth was at rest, no painter has ever drawn lips on which lay more of the unutterable pensiveness of beauty which we dream to have been Mary's in the childhood of Jesus. A tear in the heart was the instinctive answer to Stephania's every look, when she did not smile; and her large, soft, slowly-lifting eyes, were, to any elevated perception, it seemed to me, most eloquent of tenderness as tearful as it was unfathomable and angelic.

I shall have failed, however, in portraying, truly, the being of whom I am thus privileged to hold the likeness in my memory, if the reader fancies her to have nurtured her pensive disposition at the expense of a just value for real life, or a full developement of womanly feelings. It was a peculiarity of her beauty, to my eye, that, with all her earnest leaning toward a thoughtful existence, there did not seem to be one vein beneath her pearly skin, not one wavy line in her faultless person, that did not lend its proportionate consciousness to her breathing sense of life. Her bust was of the slightest fullness which the sculptor would choose for the embodying of his ideal of the best blending of modesty with complete beauty; and her throat and arms—oh, with what an inexpressible pathos of loveliness, so to speak, was moulded, under an infantine dewiness of surface, their delicate undulations! No one could be in her presence without acknowledging the perfection of her form as a woman, and rendering the passionate yet subdued homage which the purest beauty fulfils its human errand by inspiring; but, while Palgray made the halo which surrounded her outward beauty the whole orbit of his appreciation, and made of it, too, the measure of the circle of topics he choose to talk upon, there was still another and far wider ring of light about her, which he lived in too dazzling a gayety of his own to see—

a halo of a mind more beautiful than the body which shut it in; and—in this intellectual orbit of guidance to interchange of mind, with manifold deeper and higher reach than Palgray's, upon whatever topic chanced to occur—revolved I, around her who was the loveliest and most gifted of all the human beings I had been privileged to meet.

CHAPTER IV.

Bancroft Library

The month was expiring at Vallambrosa, but I had not mingled, for that length of time, with a fraternity of thoughtful men, without recognition of some of that working of spontaneous and elective magnetism to which I have alluded in a previous part of this story. Opposite me, at the table of the convent refectory, had sat a taciturn monk, whose influence I felt from the first day —a stronger consciousness of his presence, that is to say, than of any one of the other monks—though he did not seem particularly to observe me, and, till recently, had scarce spoken to me at all. He was a man of perhaps fifty years of age, with the countenance of one who had suffered and gained a victory of contemplation—a look as if no suffering could be new to him, and before whom no riddle of human vicissitudes could stay unread; but over all this penetration and sagacity was diffused a cast of genial philanthropy and good-fellowship, which told of his forgiveness of the world for what he had suffered in it. With a curiosity more at leisure, I should have sought him out, and joined him in his walks, to know more of him; but, spiritually acquainted though I felt we had become, I was far too busy with head and heart for

any intercourse, except it had a bearing on the struggle for love that I was, to all appearance, so hopelessly making.

Preparations were beginning for departure, and, with the morrow, or the day after, I was to take my way to Venice—my friends bound to Switzerland and England, and propriety not permitting me to seek another move in their company. The evening on which this was made clear to me, was one of those continuations of day into night, made by the brightness of a full Italian moon; and Palgray, whose face, troubled for the first time, betrayed to me that he was at a crisis of his fate with Stephania, evidently looked forward to this glowing night as the favorable atmosphere in which he might urge his suit, with Nature pleading in his behalf. The reluctance and evident irresolution of his daughter puzzled Mr. Wangrave—for he had no doubt that she loved Palgray, and his education of her head and heart gave him no clue to any principle of coquettishness, or willingness to give pain, for the pleasure of an exercise of power. Her mother, and all the members of the party, were aware of the mystery that hung over the suit of the young guardsman, but they were all alike discreet, while distressed, and confined their interference to the removal of obstacles in the way of the lovers' being together, and the avoidance of any topics gay enough to change the key of her spirits from the natural softness of the evening.

Vespers were over, and the sad-colored figures of the monks were gliding indolently here and there, and Stephania, with Palgray beside her, stood a little apart from the group at the door of the secular refectory, looking off at the fading purple of the

sunset. I could not join her without crossing rudely the obvious wishes of every person present; yet, for the last two days, I had scarce found the opportunity to exchange a word with her, and my emotion, now, was scarce controllable. The happier lover beside her, with his features heightened in expression (as I thought they never could be) by his embarrassment in wooing, was evidently and irresistibly the object of her momentary admiration. He offered her his arm, and made a movement toward the path off into the forest. There was an imploring deference infinitely becoming in his manner, and see it she must, with pride and pleasure. She hesitated—gave a look to where I stood, which explained to me, better than a world of language, that she had wished, at least, to speak to me on this last evening—and, before the dimness over my eyes had passed away, they were gone. Oh! pitying Heaven! give me never again, while wrapt in mortal weakness, so harsh a pang to suffer.

CHAPTER V.

The convent-bell struck midnight, and there was a footfall in the cloister. I was startled, by it, out of an entire forgetfulness of all around me, for I was lying on my bed in the monastery cell, with my hands clasped over my eyes, as I had thrown myself down on coming in; and, with a strange contrariety, my mind, broken rudely from its hope, had flown to my far-away home, oblivious of the benumbed links that lay between. A knock at my door completed the return to my despair, for, with a look at the walls of my little chamber, in the bright beam of moonlight that streamed in at the narrow window, I was, by recog-

nition, again at Vallambrosa, and Stephania, with an accepted lover's voice in her ear, was again near me, her moistened eyes steeped, with Palgray's, in the same beam of the all-visiting and unbetraying moon.

Father Ludovic entered. The gentle tone of his *benedicite,* told me that he had come on an errand of sympathy. There was little need of preliminary between two who read the inner countenance as habitually as did both of us; and, as briefly as the knowledge and present feelings of each could be re-expressed in words, we confirmed the spirit-mingling that had brought him there, and were presently as one. He had read truly the drama of love, enacting in the party of visitors to his convent; but his judgment of the possible termination of it was different from mine.

* * * * * * *

Palgray's dormitory was at the extremity of the cloister, and we presently heard him pass.

"She is alone, now," said Father Ludovic; "I will send you to her."

My mind had strained to Stephania's presence with the first footsteps that told me of their separation; and, it needed but a wave of his hand to unlink the spirit-wings from my weary frame. I was present with her.

I struggled for a moment, but in vain, to see her face. Its expression was as visible as my hand in the sun, but no feature. The mind I had read was close to me, in a presence of consciousness; and, in points, here and there, brighter, bolder, and further-reaching than I had altogether believed. She was unutterably pure—a spirit without a spot—and I remained near her, with a feeling as if my forehead were pressed down to the palms of my

hands, in homage mixed with sorrow—for I should have more recognized this in my waking study of her nature.

A moment more—a trembling effort, as if to read what were written to record my companionship for eternity—and a vague image of myself came out in shadow—clearer now, and still clearer, enlarging to the fullness of her mind. She thought wholly and only of that image I then saw; yet with a faint coloring playing to and from it, as influences came in from the outer world. Her eyes were turned in upon it in lost contemplation. But suddenly a new thought broke upon me. I saw my image, but it was not I, as I looked to myself. The type of my countenance was there; but, oh! transformed to an ideal, such as I now, for the first time, saw possible—ennobled in every defective line—purified of its taint from worldliness—inspired with high aspirations—cleared of what it had become cankered with, in its transmission through countless generations since first sent into the world, and restored to a likeness of the angel of whose illuminated lineaments it was first a copy. So thought Stephania of me. Thus did she believe I truly was. Oh! blessed, and yet humiliating, trust of woman! Oh! comparison of true and ideal, at which spirits must look, out of heaven, and of which they must long, with aching pity, to make us thus rebukingly aware!

* * * * * * *

I felt myself withdrawing from Stephania's presence. There were tears between us, which I could not see. I strove to remain, but a stronger power than my will was at work within me. I felt my heart swell with a gasp, as if death were bearing out of it the principle of life; and my head dropped on the pillow of my bed.

"Good night, my son," said the low voice of Father Ludovic;

"I have willed that you should remember what you have seen. Be worthy of her love, for there are few like her."

He closed the door, and, as the glide of his sandals died away in the echoing cloisters, I leaned forth to spread my expanding heart in the upward and boundless light of the moon—for I seemed to wish never again to lose, in the wasteful forgetfulness of sleep, the consciousness that I was loved by Stephania.

* * * * * * *

I was journeying the next day, alone, toward Venice. I had left written adieux for the party at Vallambrosa, pleading to my friends an unwillingness to bear the pain of a formal separation. Betwixt midnight and morning, however, I had written a parting letter for Stephania, which I had committed to the kind envoying of Father Ludovic, and thus it ran:—

"When you read this, Stephania, I shall be alone with the thought of you, travelling a reluctant road, but still with a burthen in my heart which will bring me to you again, and which even now envelopes my pang of separation in a veil of happiness. I have been blessed by Heaven's mercy with the power to know that you love me. Were you not what you are, I could not venture to startle you thus with a truth, which, perhaps, you have hardly confessed in waking reality to yourself; but you are one of those who are coy of no truth that could be found to have lain without alarm in your own bosom; and, with those beloved hands pressed together with the earnestness of the clasp of prayer, you will say, 'yes, I love him!'

"I leave you now, not to put our love to trial, and still less in the ordinary meaning of the phrase, to prepare to wed you. The first is little needed, angels in heaven well know. The second is a

thought which will be in time, when I have done the work on which I am newly bent by the inspiration of love—*the making myself what you think me to be.* Oh, Stephania! to feel encouraged, as God has given me strength to feel, that I may yet be this—that I may yet bring you a soul brought up to the standard you have raised, and achieve it by effort in self-denial, and by the works of honor and goodness that are as possible to a man in obscurity and poverty as to his brother in wealth and distinction—this is to me new life, boundless enlargement of sphere, food for a love of which, alas! I was not before worthy.

"I have told you unreservedly what my station in life is—what my hopes are, and what career I had marked out for struggle. I shall go on with the career, though the prizes I then mentally saw have, since, faded in value almost as much as my purpose is strengthened. Fame and wealth, my pure Stephania, are to you, as they now can only be to me, larger trusts of service and duty; and, if I hope they will come while other aims are sought, it is because they will confer happiness on parents and friends, who mistakenly suppose them necessary to the winner of your heart. I hope to bring them to you. I know that I should come as welcome without them.

"While I write—while my courage and hope throb loud in the pulses of my bosom—I can think, even happily, of separation. To leave you, the better to return, is bearable—even pleasurable—to the heart's noonday mood. But I have been steeped, for a summer now, in a presence of visible and breathing loveliness, (that you cannot forbid me to speak of, since language is too poor to out-color truth,) and there will come moments of depression—twilights of deepening and undivided loneliness—hours of

illness, perhaps—and times of discouragement and adverse cloudings over of Providence—when I shall need to be remembered with sympathy, and to know that I am so remembered. I do not ask you to write to me. It would entail difficulties upon you, and put, between us, an interchange of uncertainties and possible misunderstandings. But I can communicate with you by a surer medium, if you will grant a request. The habits of your family are such that you can, for the first hour after midnight, be always alone. Waking or sleeping, there will then be a thought of me occupying your heart, and—call it a fancy if you will—I can come and read it, on the viewless wings of the soul.

"I commend your inexpressible earthly beauty, dear Stephania, and your still brighter loveliness of soul, to God's angel, who has never left you. Farewell! You will see me when I am worthy of you—if it be necessary that it should be first in heaven, made so by forgiveness there.

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